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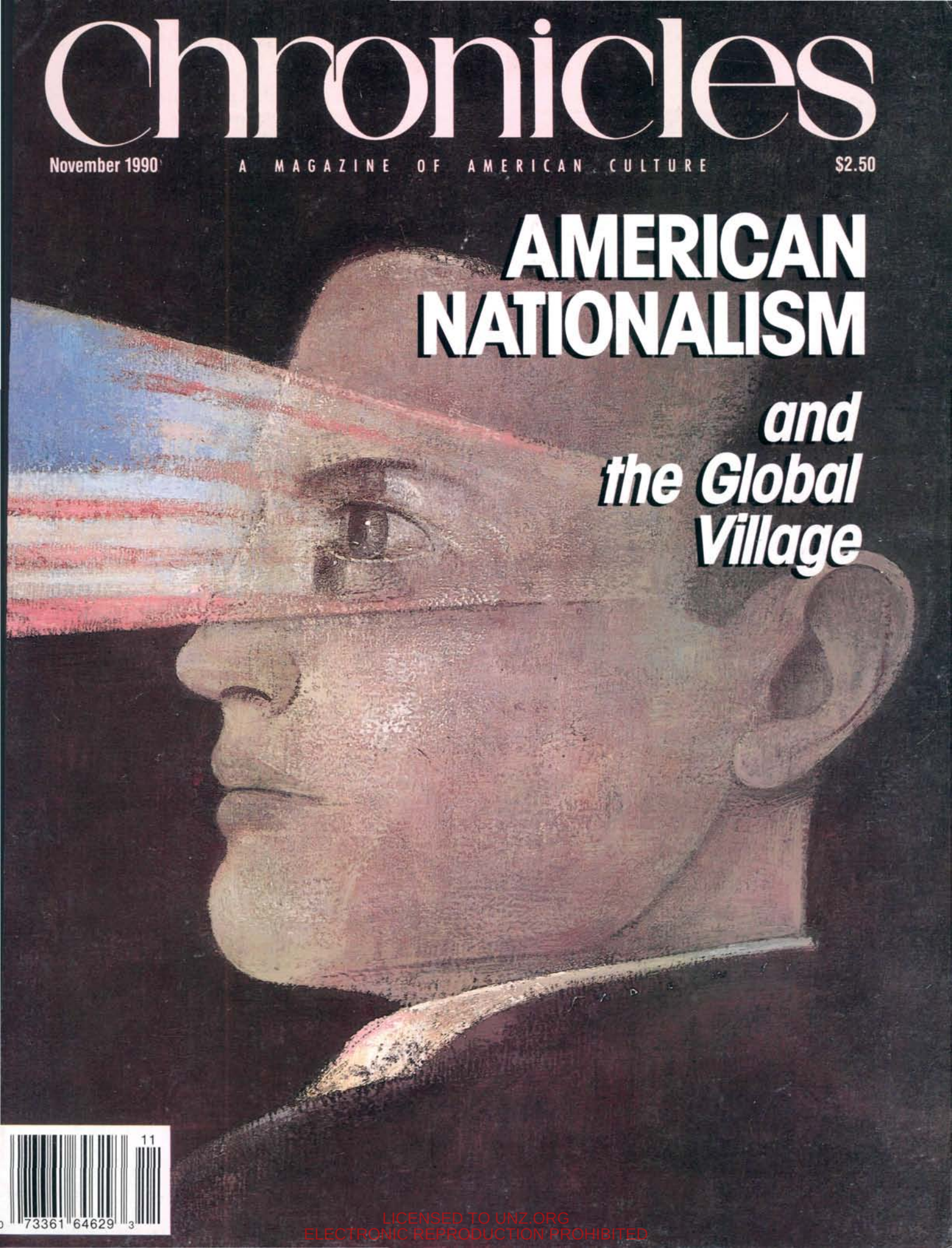
AMERICAN NATIONALISM and the Global Village



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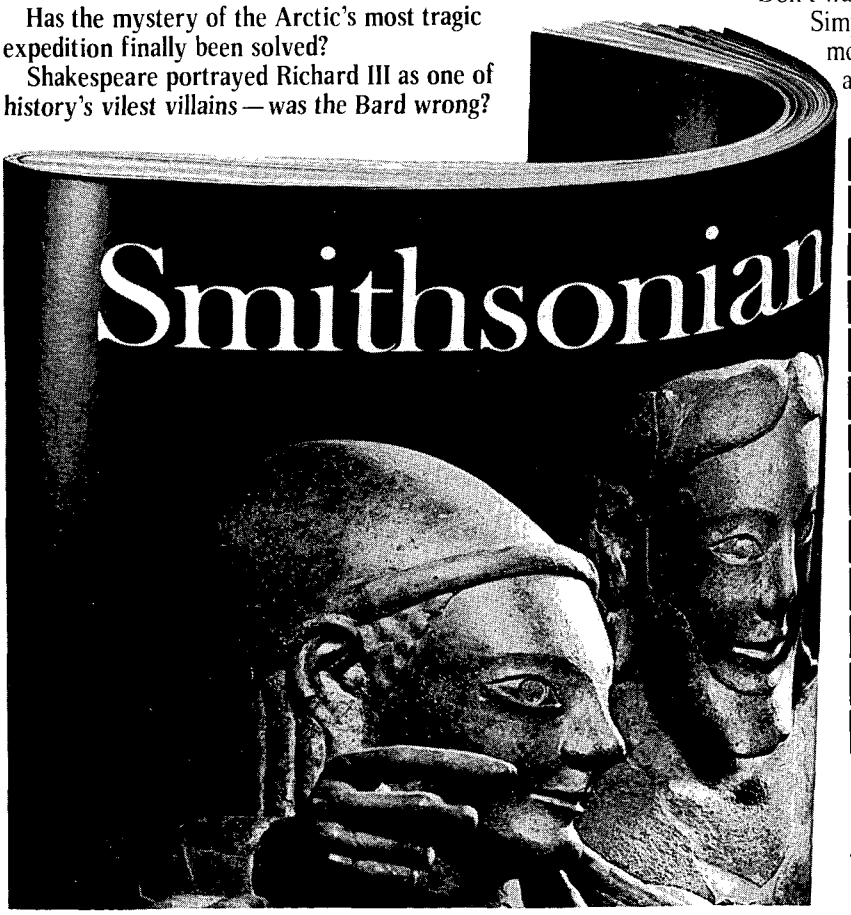

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Chronicles
A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE

"My hold of the Colonies is in the close affection which grows from common names, from kindred blood, from similar privileges, and equal protection. These are the ties which, though light as air, are as strong as links of iron."

—Edmund Burke

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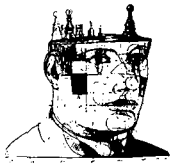

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NOVEMBER 1990/3

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EDITOR
Thomas Fleming

MANAGING EDITOR
Katherine Dalton

SENIOR EDITOR, BOOKS
Chilton Williamson, Jr.

ASSISTANT EDITOR
Theodore Pappas

ART DIRECTOR
Anna Mycek-Wodecki

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS
John W. Aldridge, Harold O.J. Brown, Samuel Francis, George Garrett, Russell Kirk, E. Christian Kopff, Clyde Wilson

CORRESPONDING EDITORS
Janet Scott Barlow, Odie Faulk, Jane Greer, John Shelton Reed, Gary Vasilash

EDITORIAL SECRETARY
Leann Dobbs

PUBLISHER
Allan C. Carlson

ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER
Michael Warder

PUBLICATION DIRECTOR
Guy C. Reffett

COMPOSITION MANAGER
Anita Fedora

CIRCULATION MANAGER
Rochelle Frank

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Advertising Phone: (815) 964-5811.
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A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE

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On 'Sylvan Socialism'

A retired USFS forester, I read John Baden's article (August 1990) with a mixed bag of reactions. To tell the truth, I thought it could have been written by the Sierra Club or Wilderness Society, those self-appointed guardians of no growth.

Let me support his view, however, that the USFS has tended to overemphasize the timber cut and resulting budget increases. It is (or was when I was a district ranger) true that budgets and promotions were heavily geared to the volume of timber cut. It is also true the USFS has strayed from its old ethic of some thirty or more years ago, in regard to its immense growth in personnel and budgets. Having said that, there are some points to be made in favor of certain elements of USFS policy. For one thing, until recent years, the USFS was run primarily by foresters and old-line nonprofessionals, real mainstays. Any forester knows the ideal forestry situation is to have roads prebuilt, in place, where access for management for multiple uses (wildlife, recreation, power line maintenance, timber, etc.) is needed. In many cases, road costs are not amortized the first time around but paid back by succeeding timber sales or other cost reductions stemming from road access. Those familiar with German forests, where roads have been in place for generations, realize how beneficial this is to the environment in the long run. Much ado is made by Baden about below-cost timber sales; however, much of this is due to initial road costs, which are permanent fixtures to be amortized over decades. German foresters view with puzzlement why "cost-benefit" and cost discounting is such a vogue here. No one can realistically guess monetary benefits fifty to one hundred-plus years from now in forestry. This short-term view is one of the things wrong with America.

It is true foresters should refrain from attempting to produce timber on poor sites, and should stick to the better ones. Here, Baden is in agreement with foresters, but then he goes on to state that the better timberland on National Forests should be auctioned off to private interests. This would dismember the National Forest system. If he thinks private forest management is necessarily better, I can show him where most of the bad management really is, right here in River City.

Finally, he buys into the disinformation perpetrated by the Wilderness Society regarding the Tongass National Forest, where I live and spent a large part of my career. There is always a kernel of truth in any argument, but as we know, liars can figure and figures can lie. Another way to look at it is the jobs and money generated by the pulp industry here, far exceeding costs by the USFS, generating revenue for the IRS and society. If one is totally against subsidies, we could look at the national parks, our highway program, the postal subsidies, or agriculture, which paid farmers an $800 million add-on in 1988 to sell wheat to Russia. And so on. The USFS is merely one ant in the colony.

—Hank Hays
Sitka, Alaska

On 'La Pasionaria of the Beltway'

To one unfamiliar with the Ms. Noonan phenomenon and controversy and book it would appear from your columns (Opinions, June 1990), that: 1) she is really a liberal who masqueraded as a conservative to get the job; 2) she simply hired out her eloquence and had no personal stance; or 3) she believed what she wrote, but felt no sense of loyalty to the man who provided her with a no doubt considerable salary and the opportunity to make a good reputation and a good book deal.

If either of the first two is correct, then the contention that she shaped the great void that was Reagan into presentable form would seem to go by the board, since she obviously took the

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ideas of someone else (and who's to say that in the chain of command they did not ultimately come from him; she would not seem to have been in a position to know) and put words to them.

If the latter, then she seems to share a distressing attribute of conservatives that this new conservative has observed: an ungracious, rebellious, contentious and often bitter refusal to have respect for anyone or care for someone's reputation. Now, one would hate to see the movement adopt some sort of *pas d'ennemi à droite* mentality; still there ought to be some civility among us, especially when the *eminences à gauche* are more than ready to get their ammunition from us. After all, one rarely finds a former associate of the great Kennedy or his late brother providing gossip about their personal defects or mocking their humanity or denigrating their achievements.

—Bishop Max Broussard
Patterson, Louisiana

CULTURAL REVOLUTIONS

NONCOMPLIANCE WITH the 1990 census was massive: the *Wall Street Journal* reported on May 21 that only 75 percent of the forms had been filled out and sent in, "down from 90 percent a decade ago." That's good. Passive resistance against such intrusions is the least we should expect of ourselves as citizens.

Thirty years ago I received the lengthy sociological survey that was sent to every fourth house in the 1960 census, and I refused to comply. I also wrote an article thumbing my nose at the "Snooper State" (see "The Fourth House," *National Review*, May 21, 1960). Although it is next to impossible to get a constitutional challenge into the courts, I succeeded on the strength of what I thought at the time was rather Menckenesque ridicule and mockery. Someone in the Census Bureau clipped my article to an interoffice memo saying he didn't think "Rickenbacker should be allowed to violate the law in this manner."

We got to court, all right, but the government wouldn't produce the documents showing the connection between the article and the prosecution. There went our defense under the First Amendment. (Subsequently, a similar defense was mounted in a California case and carried the day, but the First Amendment defense is tactical only.) We also pled the Fourth Amendment, and here I thought we held the high ground. After all, the government had to show that the "search" was "reasonable." To my knowledge, nobody has ever shown how the Constitution authorizes the forcible extraction of information from a householder concerning his toilets and so on, and as for "reasonableness," we called as our witness Mr. Robert Burgess, who had been director of the Bureau of the Census during the 1960 go-around. The judge, knowing full well that the government must prove the search reasonable, tried to find out from Mr. Burgess what the purpose of the questionnaire was. The dialogue (taken from the trial transcript) must be seen to be believed.

> The COURT: What is the purpose of it?
>
> The WITNESS: Well, it seemed to be carried out as a simplification of the training and of the routine which becomes enormous.
>
> The COURT: What was the purpose of getting that particular information?
>
> The WITNESS: Oh, that information had been obtained before 1950. It was on the census, and, some of the questions on the census, although taken at the same time by any given enumerator from a given household, some of them were, as they came to those questions, they would say these are—we will skip these for this household and—
>
> The COURT: Well, what was the purpose for this somewhat extensive questionnaire in 1960?
>
> The WITNESS: Well, those questions were asked before in 1950; for instance, questions mostly asked. Only minor changes from census to census in the question.
>
> The COURT: What was the purpose for getting all that information? What was done with it?
>
> The WITNESS: Well, it was summarized, as it had been in 1950 when sampling was done in a different procedure. These were questions that were explored very carefully through committees, one within the government and one of experts outside and one of users outside, "What changes would you like and the information you would get," and we turned down a very considerable number of those questions, requests for extensions of information, both within the Government and outside the Government. They wanted more information for house—for guidance, as an aid to housing, for instance. By the way, if that—
>
> The COURT: Was that the general purpose of that questionnaire, as an aid to housing?
>
> The WITNESS: You see, the Housing Administration gives Government aid in certain cities for improving the housing conditions.

Believe it or not, that gibberish was allowed to stand as proof of reasonable-

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ness. I was convicted, given a 60-day jail sentence (suspended), and fined $100. One beneficent result of my little campaign was to stir the Congress to remove the jail sentence from the census statute; the $100 fine still applies to the uncooperative but is almost never assessed.

On April 24, 1969, I had the honor of testifying before the late Senator Sam Ervin's Subcommittee on Constitutional Rights of the Senate Judiciary Committee. The senator was holding hearings on S. 1791, a bill "to secure personal privacy and to protect the constitutional right of individuals to ignore unwarranted requests for personal information." My testimony ran seven pages in the transcript, some of it pretty hot stuff if I do say so myself, but I'll quote only a few lines narrating the further history of the court case.

> In October 1962 the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit affirmed the judgment of the lower court. I appealed to the Supreme Court for certiorari and that appeal was rejected. It is interesting to note that the opinion of the Court of Appeals was written by the Honorable Thurgood Marshall, now a distinguished member of the Supreme Court. In a recent decision Mr. Justice Marshall came forward to protect the right of privacy of the citizen in his home—at least inasmuch as the citizen chooses to possess and presumably enjoy pornographic films, Everyone who is devoted to the idea of individual liberty must applaud Mr. Justice Marshall for his recent decision. But a growing number of American citizens are becoming uncomfortable and even in many cases almost mutinous in a society that expresses its concern almost exclusively in terms of the liberty of pornographers and the privacy of perverts and the convenience of criminals. Why, I keep asking myself, is a law-abiding citizen unprotected in his home against the irrational and capricious inquisitions of the government when all manner of degraded, suspect, and parasitical gentry enjoy the express protection of our highest courts?

And there, as far as I know, the matter has stood until now. But a new wind is blowing, cold and clear from the mysterious peaks of the Ninth Amendment. ("The enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.") I recommend to all a close reading of *The Rights Retained by the People: The History and Meaning of the Ninth Amendment*, edited by Randy Barnett (George Mason University Press, 1989). This collection of excellent scholarly and lawyerly studies shows that the Ninth Amendment is a sleeper, our ace in the hole. From 1791 to 1936, as Calvin Massey points out (p. 291), there appears to have been no scholarly commentary on the Ninth Amendment. A veritable avalanche of studies has appeared since 1981, mainly in the law journals. This sudden upsurge of interest in an amendment that seemed to defy comprehension for a century and a half may be associated with the equally sudden upsurge of the language of "rights" as shouted in the streets since 1960 or so. It is associated also, I think, with growing popular discontent with a government that seems to be pressing against the citizen from every angle.

Open your ears and you will hear the *vox populi* calling for its rights. And these are the unenumerated rights, the ones protected only by the Ninth Amendment: women claiming a right to their reproductive function (at the expense of the fetus, no less); people of all sexes—all three or four sexes now recognized by the Bureau of the Census—claiming the right to die (at the expense of suicide); people claiming the right to breathe (at the expense of the next fellow's right to smoke—which *he* claims as a right); the right to peace and quiet (death to boom boxes!); the right to be let alone. In a day or two of attentive listening you will hear all manner of rights claimed with perfect confidence by people who have no idea what the Ninth Amendment says. And yet when they get to court it may be the Ninth, and nothing but the Ninth, that saves them.

The obnoxious prying of the Census Bureau is a terrific affront to a right that everyone understands, the one I just mentioned, the "right to be let alone," as the man in the street says. You know the argument: "Look, I'm at home with my wife and kids, I get along with my neighbors, I pay my taxes, I haven't done anything wrong, I have a right to be let alone, dammit."

That is a Ninth Amendment right *par excellence* and if I should be so lucky as to be taken to court by the government for my failure to cringe and obey when faced with a census questionnaire, I'll stand foursquare on the Ninth—this time around.

For the hallmark of a Ninth Amendment right is that it clearly antedates the formation of the federal government. A woman's right to kill her fetus is a rather freshly discovered right. But the right to be let alone is universally seen to be a basic aspect of civil society. William Pitt the Elder (1708-1778) said it best: "The poorest man may in his cottage bid defiance to all the forces of the crown. It may be frail—its roof may shake—the wind may blow through it—the storm may enter, the rain may enter—but the King of England may not enter—all his forces dare not cross the threshold of the ruined tenement."

—*William F. Rickenbacker*

MACHIAVELLI, in answer to the question of whether a prince should prefer gold or arms, replied that arms were the logical choice since gold could not always buy a strong military but a strong military could usually acquire wealth. This answer had not changed three and a half centuries later when Kipling wrote, "Gold for the mistress—silver for the maid—/ Copper for the craftsman cunning at his trade. / 'Good!' said the Baron, sitting in his hall, / 'But Iron—Cold Iron—is master of them all.'" Nor, as demonstrated by Iraq's seizure of Kuwait, has another century changed this reality.

On a per capita basis, Kuwait has been for a generation one of the world's richest countries. Kuwait's oil reserves are more than half the size of Saudi Arabia's and twice that of Iraq's. Its refinery capacity is also second only to Saudi Arabia. It has a fleet of tankers that supply not only foreign customers

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but its own network of outlets for petroleum products in Europe. Kuwait has the Middle East's largest nitrogenous organic fertilizer industry. It has overseas ventures in both oil and fertilizer (including ownership of oil reserves in the United States). It has a stock exchange and a general reserve of government-owned financial assets that have in some years yielded income rivaling that produced by its oil fields. It also had a long-term economic plan to assure its citizens prosperity for another century.

What Kuwait lacked was the ability to defend itself against a powerful and aggressive neighbor. Its unguarded wealth was an open invitation to plunder. This is not the first time gold has failed to provide a shield against iron in the modern Middle East. Lebanon was once the prosperous center of finance in the region, but the bankers were no match for the local warlords who turned luxury hotels into high-rise bunker systems.

It is fashionable to claim that the advent of a global economy has finally elevated gold above iron in world politics, but the global economy is already five hundred years old, and its principal effect has been to widen the scope and increase the scale of conflict. It is the very fact of interdependency that makes it vital for governments to project their power in an attempt to control events in distant lands or mold the international system itself in ways beneficial to its interests.

The concept of a "new" world order based on cosmopolitan commerce divorced from nation-state politics is an ahistorical illusion. Its imminent establishment has been falsely heralded for nearly three hundred years. Thus appeals to its enlightened values are unlikely to persuade Saddam Hussein to give up the wealth his army has won in Kuwait. Indeed, a U.S. policy of political and military appeasement that depended only on economic sanctions was sure to fail. Business "realism" would subvert any long-term boycott of Iraqi-controlled oil that was not backed by a credible show of force. President Bush had to throw American "iron" into the balance.

Americans need a refresher course in world history. During this century communism generated a great deal of bloodshed through war and revolution, and Soviet imperialism also served to amplify many other conflicts whose origins had nothing to do with Marxism. But the attention given the Cold War often made it seem a unique phenomenon, leading to the belief that if it would only abate, the world would return to its "normal" condition, which was erroneously thought to be peace. Yet there have been other wars in this century that were rooted in ideologies other than communism as well as wars based on religion and plain old *Realpolitik*. Among them must be counted the two world wars. During the 1980's, in addition to supporting the Contra war against the Sandinista regime in Nicaragua and liberating Grenada, America used its military against noncommunist foes in Libya, the Persian Gulf, Lebanon, and Panama.

The respite in the Cold War has not changed the fundamental nature of the international system. It has only changed the balance of power within the system. The current crisis in the Persian Gulf has revealed that the decline of Moscow has not meant the rise of Washington. Indeed, just the opposite has occurred. Instead of seeing changes in Eastern Europe and the collapse of the Soviet economy as an opportunity for America to regain the superior position lost in the 1970's, American leaders have taken events as an excuse to do even less.

The decline of both superpowers provides an opportunity for regional powers to expand. Iraq is the first, but will not be the last, to take advantage of this change in the global balance. At the same time, American military capabilities will be drastically reduced by politicians whose primary interest is cutting the budget.

The day after Iraq invaded, President Bush proclaimed a new force reduction target; a 25 percent cut in active forces by 1995 instead of by the 1997 date set earlier. This is still not enough for congressional Democrats who want the military cut by a full third. The argument is that with the Soviet threat reduced in Europe, the United States now has a vast surplus in military capability that should be reduced. What is forgotten is that throughout the Cold War, America and its NATO allies operated at a huge deficit in conventional forces versus the Soviet Union-Warsaw Pact, a deficit that required the West to rely on the early use of nuclear weapons should war erupt.

The Iraqi challenge has revealed that current U.S. force levels still show a deficit. Even if every division and tactical air unit could be transported from Europe to Saudi Arabia by magic (the only way it could be done given the lack of sea and airlift capacity), it is an open question whether these forces could defeat the battle-hardened million-man army of Hussein that would outnumber them by more than three to one. Of course, the question will soon be moot as American forces are brought home from Europe to be deactivated.

It is bad enough that budget decisions are being made with a blind eye to current events. But to make plans based on the notion that nothing adverse will happen the rest of the decade is irresponsible in the extreme. Political change in Europe may make it prudent to withdraw some or most of the American units now stationed there. However, these units should be retained as a strategic reserve in the United States, combat ready and supported by expanded transport and logistical capabilities. There is a high probability that they will be needed elsewhere.

The notion that America only needs a small "contingency army" composed of light units (paratroopers, rangers, infantry) without the heavy armored units deployed in Europe is dangerous nonsense. Equally false is the notion that aircraft carriers, cruise missiles, and stealth fighters are only needed to fight the Soviets. Tanks, heavy artillery, jets, submarines, and missile systems of all types fill the arsenals of governments around the world. Forty-one Third World states possess a total of over 250 submarines. A dozen regimes have 1,000 or more heavy tanks (Iraq has 5,500, triple what the U.S. has in Europe). Forty have domestic armament industries. Many states in Latin America, Asia, and the Middle East are developing ballistic missiles of intermediate range. And Iraq has successfully tested a three-stage rocket it claims can reach orbit (meaning it could be used as an ICBM). Nuclear, chemical, and even biological weapon technologies have also proliferated. The countries acquiring these new

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systems (Argentina, India, Iran, Iraq, North Korea, and Syria) would require a substantial military effort to subdue.

But in the current domestic political environment, the United States will not take the steps necessary to create or maintain a military capability of sufficient global reach to protect its interests. It thus risks becoming a larger version of Kuwait, a nation of great wealth but with major assets left exposed. The plundering process started long ago (OPEC's 1973 grab in the wake of America's retreat from Vietnam being the most obvious) but will now accelerate. Those who believe that they can trade iron for gold end up with neither.

—*William R. Hawkins*

HARVARD UNIVERSITY, in 1959, refused more than $350,000 in money offered for student loans by the National Defense Education Act in the wake of the Soviets' *Sputnik* shock because of the requirement that students submit to an oath and an affidavit of loyalty and noncommunist affiliation. Harvard President Nathan B. Pusey stated that the demand singled out college students as a group not worthy of the nation's trust. It would have been possible to interpret the NDEA requirement differently, but Pusey was in harmony with the old academic and professional tradition which contended that higher education presupposes adherence to certain standards of personal integrity and academic accomplishment.

Since then, the old idea that education includes *moral* education has suffered some harsh blows. Recently, following an earlier decision by the Student Council, the Harvard Faculty Council recommended "that Harvard end its remaining connection with ROTC within two years unless the Defense Department drops its discriminatory policies against gay and lesbian applicants for cadets." The Harvard faculty "downgraded" ROTC from a for-credit to an extracurricular program in 1969, but allowed students to participate in M.I.T.'s ROTC program (91 students in 1989-90). In April 1989, the Harvard Student Council first approved, then rejected proposals to bring the ROTC back to Harvard on a credit basis, the rejection coming in response to pressure from gay and lesbian activists. At that time, President Derek Bok replied to a query by this editor explaining that there was very little demand for ROTC at Harvard, but failing to answer the question of whether, and if yes, why, it was the university's policy to demand that the Department of Defense change its stand on homosexuality.

In some areas, as pointed out by one of Harvard's 1990 honorary degree recipients, David Riesman, "Derek Bok has been a man of stamina and seriousness who has stood firm against political pressure, as in appointing a dean of the Law School over the wishes of many in the Critical Legal Studies group." There is no doubt that as president of the nation's oldest university, Bok has been subjected to immense pressure to make symbolic concessions and statements of many kinds. But the university has totally caved in on the issues of sexual morality in general and of homosexuality in particular.

This leads to one of the curious moral anomalies of our day: we see on all sides a moralistic crusade against every aspect of cigarette manufacture and use, on the grounds that cigarette smoking creates real health risks, but this oral zeal for tobacco purity is accompanied by benign tolerance of and even support for sexual practices that promote ever graver risks. On May 18, Bok announced the university's determination to divest itself of all stock in firms that manufacture tobacco products, "motivated," in Bok's words, "by a desire not to be associated as a shareholder with companies engaged in significant sales of products that create a substantial and unjustified risk of harm to other human beings." Apparently, Harvard has no qualms about attempting to force the Defense Department to acquiesce in practices that create a "substantial and unjustified risk of harm to other human beings," nor with being an advocate or patron, not merely a passive shareholder.

Although Harvard carries the word *Veritas* (truth) in its seal, ringed by the expression, *Christo et ecclesiae* (for Christ and the church), its current official posture not merely repudiates traditional Christian values but in effect acts as though they had never existed, and ignores the *veritas* about the social, psychological, and medical consequences of practices such as those which biblical morality forbids. It is true that some traditionalist Christians, especially fundamentalists and some of the newer religious communities, have long condemned tobacco smoking, but most Christians and Jews have regarded it with tolerance if not outright affection, and the present anti-smoking movement has little to do with religion.

Harvard seems to be changing its motto from *pro Christo et ecclesiae* to *contra Christum et ecclesiam*. In view of the broadening, over three and a half centuries, of the school's spiritual base to accept other religious traditions, one would hardly expect the Harvard of today to stand *pro Christo*. But *contra Christum et ecclesiam*? The university maintains a divinity school with a distinguished faculty as well as a university church and a Christian ministry. But these institutions touch only a minority of the university community, and the stand taken by the Harvard Faculty Council addresses not merely the whole university community but the federal government and the whole of society.

Although at today's Harvard—as at many other centers of higher learning—tolerance is demanded for acts that traditional Jewish and Christian morality has consistently disapproved, no similar tolerance is shown to those who

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permit themselves to voice the old values of biblical religion. No tolerance was shown to Harvard undergraduate Sumner Anderson, '92, president of the Republican Club, whose remarks, printed in the *Harvard Crimson*, caused outrage. Anderson's assertion that homosexuality is a disease that is repulsive and "just totally abnormal," allegedly generated general outrage on campus. His expressions, "repulsive" and "abnormal" are not stronger than the Hebrew word *to'ebah*, abomination (*e.g.*, Leviticus 18:22).

The battle of words continues unabated. Unfortunately, those who take what we might consider the right position, namely that of upholding biblical norms, often do so in ways that are inappropriate to win sympathy. Thus the *Harvard Lampoon*, no standard-bearer of biblical religion, intensified its traditional campaign of supposedly humorous vilification against the consistently pro "gay" *Harvard Crimson*, publishing not one but three parody issues last year, and in the process garnering complaints of being racist, sexist, anti-Semitic, and homophobic.

Commenting on the *Lampoon/Crimson* imbroglio, Dean of Students Archie C. Epps III said, "I thought it was very vulgar and in poor taste, and in my opinion, the people who prepared it don't belong at a place like Harvard." (But what about those who engage in *to'ebah*, Dean Epps? Do they belong there?) Epps was once unceremoniously thrown out of his University Hall office when it was "occupied" by protesting students in the course of the student revolts of the late 60's, and perhaps he is now skittish about attempting to stand against popular student will.

Harvard was originally founded to train Congregational (Calvinist) ministers for the Massachusetts Bay colony, and until relatively recently Harvard College, at any rate, saw itself as acting *in loco parentis* towards its students, most of whom were minors before the age of majority was lowered from the traditional 21 to 18. Harvard's Divinity School and Memorial Church still bear witness to the school's origins, but its relationship to historic Christianity has become tenuous, to say the least. Pluralism at Harvard and other once-Christian institutions no longer means sympathetic acceptance of other great spiritual traditions, or even of the reverse spiritualities of agnosticism and atheism, but now requires the abolition of moral norms.

The exclusion of sexual morality from the range of moral issues that is important to the university says, in effect, that sexual conduct has no moral significance and that what used to be considered moral development has no place in intellectual development. It is possible, of course, to adopt the position that Christian morals have nothing to do with the academy or the life of the mind, but in order to do this one must repudiate not only Christian and Jewish morals but most of the moral and ethical reasoning of human societies through the centuries. It is sad that the nation's oldest university is apparently not merely a willing but even an eager participant in this repudiation.

—Harold O.J. Brown

Principalities & Powers

by Samuel Francis

"And the bogeyman will get ya, if ya don't watch out," sang James Whitcomb Riley in one of his most popular and most insipid poems. The bogeyman is still out there, it seems. Sometimes he's Libya's Muammar Qaddafi; sometimes Syria's Hafez Assad, or Idi Amin, Yassir Arafat, the Ayatollah Khomeini, Abu Nidal, or any of a small army of other characters who seem to bear more resemblance to the kinds of villains that Sax Rohmer used to make up than they do to any real human being. Late last summer the bogeyman shifted his shape once again, this time becoming Saddam Hussein of Iraq. He was going to get us—if we didn't watch out.

Even before Mr. Hussein decided to top off his summer vacation by swallowing Kuwait in a midnight snack, *U.S. News & World Report* dubbed him "the most dangerous man in the world," a sure signal that the bogeyman was about to change his address once more. What exactly Mr. Hussein had done or even contemplated doing to merit this appellation remains unknown to me. It's perfectly true that the dictator of Iraq is not the sort of fellow that English lady mystery writers would use as one of their heavies. His capacity for brutality, cunning, and mendacity far transcends the very limited grasp of human evil that Agatha Christie, Dorothy Sayers, and their sisters displayed. But why he was any more dangerous than a host of other malefactors—including a number of utterly unscrupulous and repulsive American politicians—was never clear.

But once Mr. Hussein had smashed Kuwait, the monsters of a thousand slasher films seemed to leap from the celluloid, expropriate his sullen puss, and cast their torches toward our temple doors. Rotgut liberal columnist Mary McGrory, assuring us that the "beast of Baghdad" was "capable of anything," advocated doing just about anything to get rid of him. Neoconservative Paul Greenberg called for an American onslaught against Iraq. Professional Negro Jesse Jackson intoned that the United States must be ready to "use military force, multilaterally or unilaterally," to drive Hussein back into his lair. Leftist Senator Chris Dodd opined that "obviously, the oil reserves pose an immediate, major security threat." And before the week was over, President Bush and the Pentagon were dispatching some two hundred thousand U.S. troops in the largest force to go abroad since the Vietnam War to the Arabian desert, there perhaps to die for the security of the House of Saud and to save the clan of Sabah from the cruel fate of munching caviar on the Riviera for the rest of history.

Not even the Ayatollah Khomeini's attack on the U.S. Embassy in Tehran in 1979 provoked the kind of unanimous consent to commit mayhem against the aggressor that the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait incited, nor did terrorist attacks against Americans or the Soviet massacre of Korean Air Lines Flight 007 in the 1980's. And yet Hussein had done absolutely nothing to the United States itself or its citizens or their property. All he want-

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ed to do was gobble up a small feudal enclave that could not possibly have existed without superpower protection and to raise the price of oil so he could pay off the $70-billion debt he piled up during his nine-year war with Iran.

Of course, his drastic and bloodthirsty means of satisfying that ambition did raise serious implications for the national security and economic well-being of the United States, and even more so for those of Western Europe and Japan. There was ample reason for Mr. Bush, in concert with the Europeans and the Japanese, to explain patiently but firmly to Mr. Hussein that while, like any other Third World cobra, he might sink his fangs into the flesh of any of his neighbors he chose, he'd better forget about any plans to bite or blackmail the West. Hussein should have been open to this argument, since, in the long run, he needs the markets of the West as much as we need the oil itself, and eventually, if market forces had prevailed, we would probably have gotten the oil, albeit at a somewhat higher price, without finding our economy in ruins or even having to stand in line at the pump to buy it. That at least seemed to be the consensus of most oil experts as the crisis began quickly to turn into a disaster.

But the wrath directed against Mr. Hussein went far beyond any legitimate concern for the concrete security and economic interests of the West or the United States, and when Mr. Bush addressed the American people on the morning of August 8 to explain why he was sending their sons and daughters to gape into the jaws of the new Great Satan, he made only passing reference to our own national interests and security.

After roundly denouncing Hussein's "outrageous and brutal act of aggression" against Kuwait, Mr. Bush asserted what he called four "principles" that would guide our policy and that presumably justified his use of military power. These were the withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait, the restoration of "Kuwait's legitimate government," "the security and stability of the Persian Gulf," and the protection of the lives of American citizens. With the exception of the last, however, none of these "principles"—in fact, they are merely policy goals or objectives—arose from any expression of the real interests and security of the United States, nor was it likely that any of them could be achieved through the means the President had chosen.

It would require far more military power than the United States deployed to the sands of Araby to force Hussein out of Kuwait, let alone deposit the emir back into his palace, and Mr. Bush did not seem to contemplate an invasion of Iraq. In the absence of such a military blow to his solar plexus, Hussein had no reason to disgorge the rich morsel he had just masticated. Mr. Bush, moreover, never explained his solicitude for the emir and his government or why Americans should be prepared to die for it.

Nor did Mr. Bush's goal of stabilizing the Persian Gulf reflect an accurate reading of U.S. interests there. The "Carter Doctrine," which was dusted off and hauled out to justify U.S. intervention, says nothing about the "security and stability" of the Gulf, but rather warns against efforts by any "outside power"—namely, the Soviets—to gain control of it. Granted that we have a strong interest in keeping outside powers from dominating access to our oil supply, it does not follow that we should use force to manage the internal squabbles of the Gulf powers themselves, unless these conflicts threaten to close off our access, which Iraq's invasion did not.

Mr. Bush's fourth principle—protecting American lives abroad—is certainly a legitimate U.S. interest, and one that legitimately may require force. But Mr. Hussein did not threaten the lives of the three thousand-odd American citizens living in Iraq and Kuwait. He simply forbade them to leave the country, as he did other foreigners resident there, and he forcibly rounded up a number of Yanks and hosted them at five-star hotels in Baghdad. Of course his intentions were unclear and his methods uncalled for, but he acted only after Mr. Bush had declared an embargo against Iraq and frozen its assets in the United States. Given the absence of any hostile act on the part of Iraq against this country, the President's policy could be construed only as an act of aggression by the United States against Iraq. In other words, the Iraqi detention of American citizens, as frightening as it was, was a response to a U.S. provocation, not an act of aggression. The United States loves to slam sanctions on countries it doesn't approve of and to strut about setting an example to the world, but it would be well for our policymakers to consider that sanctions and embargoes are serious matters in international affairs and invite retaliation. Not all countries are as supine about a cut-off of their economic lifelines as South Africa has been.

In sum, then, despite brief references to U.S. dependence on foreign oil—far less now than it was in the early 1970's—Mr. Bush said absolutely nothing to show that the interests and security of the United States were so seriously jeopardized by Mr. Hussein's invasion that American military forces were needed abroad. What, then, are the real reasons for the President's actions and for the nearly hysterical chorus of assent to his response to an act of conquest that was neither unique nor unprecedented?

The real reasons may be elicited from Mr. Bush's other remarks in his address and from what a number of commentators let drop in their own jeremiads against Iraq. "We're beginning a new era," the President intoned in his speech. "This new era can be full of promise, an age of freedom, a time of peace for all peoples. But if history teaches us anything, it is that we must resist aggression, or it will destroy our freedoms."

The real reason why American troops must risk their lives for the emir of Kuwait and the safety of his tribe, the reason for the strong support for the President's action among publicists who have made a career out of denouncing the United States when it acts unilaterally in its own interests and of concocting extenuations of aggression when it was committed by the Soviets, the Vietnamese, the Sandinistas, and the Cubans, and the reason for the quick endorsement and cooperation from the Soviets and the United Nations is that they all have seen the future and it works. That future is to be one in which specific nations and their interests are to be subordinated to the "global economy," the "new international order," the needs of the "global village," and other cosmopolitan shadows that flit through the speeches and books produced by the emerging trans-

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national elite. "We," the President continued, referring to the other leaders of Western Europe, the Middle East, Asia, North and South America, NATO, and presumably the Red Cross and the Knights Templars, "we agree that this is not an American problem or a European problem or a Middle East problem. It is the world's problem." At which point the citizens of every independent country in the world should have quietly slipped the safety catches on their revolvers.

It is the emerging transnational order that constitutes Mr. Bush's "new era," and Saddam Hussein's brutality against Kuwait, which produced what the pundits immediately denominated as the "first international crisis of the post-Cold War era," is a definite no-no under the still misty codes that will govern the new age. Not only wars of conquest for the satisfaction of national interests and grievances but also any action that threatens the functioning of the whole is equally illegitimate and is fair game for coordinated multinational police measures.

It was specifically for that reason that *Washington Post* columnist Haynes Johnson, who has spent most of the last two years spearing Mr. Bush, hailed the President's actions as demonstrating "presidential leadership of high order." "It's possible," warbled Mr. Johnson, "given the extraordinary unanimity of world opinion and sanctions endorsed across the ideological spectrum of nations, that a new and more hopeful world order can emerge from the latest threatening actions in the Persian Gulf. If so, Bush will receive justified credit for helping to create it."

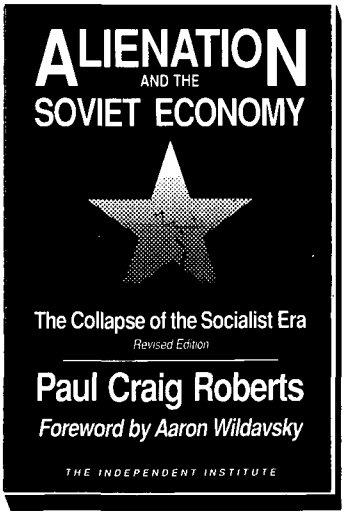
Mr. Johnson's ruminations on the new age were soon echoed by other pundits. The editorial page of the *Wall Street Journal* instructed us a few days later as to the "more significant" reasons we should be in the Gulf in addition to the narrowly selfish one of protecting "the integrity of the world's oil supply." "With the world now being made small by the wonders of electronic miniaturization and instant communication, it has grown extraordinarily vulnerable to this kind of threat. If in the next century the world is to realize the promise of the interdependencies it has begun to create, it will have to learn to suppress piracy."

Zbigniew Brzezinski, ever prepared to strike his lyre in praise of the "technotronic age," joined in the chorus also. "A brutal and forcible annexation of a member of the international community by a more powerful neighbor cannot be accepted, and it should not be tolerated. The international order would be in grave jeopardy if it were to be otherwise." Neoconservative Charles Krauthammer sang the same song: "Today there is another value at stake in the Gulf. It is even more important than oil. It is world order."

Mr. Bush's speech was indeed a kind of declaration of interdependence for that new order, and he began it less sonorously than Thomas Jefferson but no less ominously. "In the life of a nation," he pronounced, "we're called upon to define who we are and what we believe." Mr. Bush's speech was nothing less than a redefinition of the United States for the new era to which he will deliver us, and his remarks told us, perhaps more subtly than the President knew, what the U.S. role in it will be. Not an attack on American interests and security, not geopolitical and strategic concerns for our own security or treaty obligations to which we are publicly and legally committed, will mobilize American troops for warfare, but any act of "aggression" that derails the evolution of the new transnational regime.

The new enemy is neither fascism nor communism nor the ever-changing Third World bogeyman, but rather national autonomy itself, and the wicked and violent autonomy asserted by Saddam Hussein against Kuwait seemed to be a good place to start mopping up the foe before he got out of hand. Global trade, narcotics, anti-genocide, and anti-terrorism conventions are already helping to transcend national independence and midwife the birth of the new order, but what Mr. Bush and the states cooperating with his policy achieved in the Gulf last summer brings us closer to a formalization of that order than any other action previously taken. What country will be the next to feel its concerted wrath; how many Americans will have to die for it; and how long will it be before our own nation is punished for not submitting to its universal hegemony? ◈

THE DEMISE OF SOCIALISM



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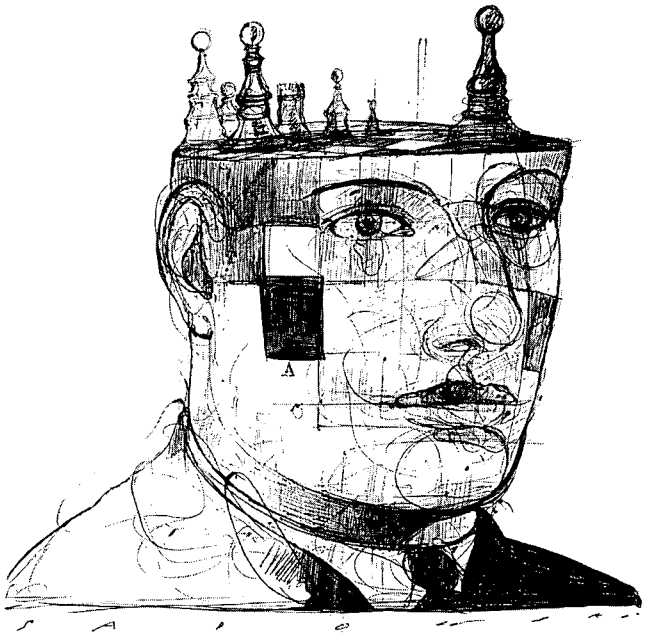

Wiktor Sadowski

Further Reflections on Violence

by Thomas Fleming

Saddam Hussein's little expedition into Kuwait has begun to take on the colors of a counter-crusade against European and American influence in the Middle East. As I write, in the second week of August, it is too early to predict the outcome of any of President Bush's diplomatic and military initiatives. In general, he deserves praise for the caution with which he has acted but blame for the vehement rhetoric in which he and other American politicians have been indulging. Saddam is not Hitler, and Iraq is a nation that, for all its "million-man army," could not even conquer the priest-ridden shambles of what had been Iran.

Of course, our own affirmative action army may prove to be no match for Iraq's well-equipped mob of Arabs. And, as Bill Hawkins points out elsewhere in this issue, America is woefully underprepared to shoulder the burdens of empire. We are back to the policies of the 1930's when FDR was cutting the military budget *and* goading the Japanese into war. But George Bush has no Douglas MacArthur to rebuke him.

The idea of shedding a single drop of American blood to restore the emir of Kuwait (or lower oil prices for bankers and lawyers commuting to work) is worse than preposterous. Even Saudi Arabia is important to us only as a strategic ally to which we have made commitments. On its own merits the regime of the Saudi "royal" family is not worth a single bullet, much less a single life. But if our aim was to aid the Saudis, our efforts to drag them into the conflict may have sealed their fate, since we have given Saddam Hussein all the evidence he needs to portray himself as an Arab nationalist fighting against American carpetbaggers and Saudi scalawags.

It is now a week later as I write, and some of my worst fears have materialized. Egypt and Turkey have maintained faith with the United States, but President Mubarak has put himself in an unenviable position. Since Egypt receives over $2 billion a year in aid from the United States, the Iraqis can say with some justification that Mubarak is only "an obedient imperialist agent," as he was called in *al-Thawra*, Hussein's party organ. The Iranians, at this point, still claim to be holding tough, despite Saddam Hussein's generous concession of one thousand square miles of territory. But no one in the Arab world has ever believed anything the Iranians say. They are a people for whom "the truth" means only a lie sold to the highest bidder.

Meanwhile, the other Hussein has also refused to allow his country, Jordan, to be offered as a sacrifice on the altar of world peace. The king, while promising to honor the embargo, managed to qualify his promise by referring to the U.N. charter, which guarantees relief to nonbelligerent nations suffering from the effects of an embargo. Even if the king of Jordan wanted to join the American offensive, it is not clear that his people would let him: the pro-Iraq demonstrations on the streets of Aman look like the real thing, a rising tide of anti-Western, specifically anti-American sentiment. Even George Ball conceded that "Arabs privately have a considerable admiration for Saddam Hussein." It will be America's worst nightmare, if our vigorous defense of "Abdul Abulbul Emir" results in a pan-Arab

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alliance against the United States.

As Sam Francis points out, the Iraqi dictator has committed an unforgivable sin by acting as a nationalist in an internationalist age. Now that the Cold War is over and history has come to a screeching halt, the United States and its once-again noble ally the Soviet Union will join hands to insure the peace and freedom of every oasis and shantytown in the world. That, at least, seemed to be the burden of President Bush's speech on August 8. Like most Americans, I am completely in favor of actions taken to protect American lives in Liberia (what these people are doing in Liberia or Iraq is another matter), but I can find no conceivable justification for sending in American boys to die fighting for this or that group of heroic democrats or gangster allies. If the Russian bear has really clipped his claws—as both the President and the Democratic leadership appear to believe—then the last pretext for American interventionism has been taken away.

What possible good do we think we can accomplish in Liberia or Haiti or Iraq? People who have been butchering each other for centuries are not about to recognize any Pax Americana that is not enforced, day after day, by bayonets and strategic air strikes, and the same Americans who are crying out for the blood of Saddam Hussein will be singing a dirge six months from now as the body bags are carried past the CBS cameras on the *Evening News*. We don't have the stomach for empire; we showed that in Korea and Vietnam, and if we did embark on a course of imperialist aggression, it would be nice to think that the American people stood to gain something more than lower plane fares.

Why not take a page out of the Israelis' book? Israel has been denouncing the evil Hussein for years, demanding action from the United States, but now that the New Hitler has succeeded in provoking us, Israel's leaders have declared they won't get involved in a war that does not affect their security or material interests. Exactly. It is impossible not to admire a country that is brave enough to pursue a policy of selfish nationalism in this age of internationalism and the New World Order.

It is not that the internationalists don't have a case. If the choice is between a peaceful world administered by the U.N. Security Council or a world periodically torn to pieces by homocidal despots, drug lords, and ethnic terrorists, who wouldn't choose to cede major portions of national sovereignty in the interest of peace and freedom? Saddam Hussein wouldn't, and neither would I. He, because he is an Iraqi nationalist and perhaps an Arab imperialist; I, because I believe that we—and by "we" I mean first the American people but also everyone on the face of the earth—stand to lose more than we will gain.

To explain what I am talking about requires a brief detour into political theory. Two years ago in a book (*The Politics of Human Nature*) I attempted to refine the old distinction between community and society (Tönnies' *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*). Institutions of community, so I argued, are all rooted in the family and are exemplified by the long-suffering love of a mother who accepts her children no matter what they have done. Institutions of society, on the other hand, derive from male groups, hunting bands for example, in which the ruling principles are not love and acceptance but competition and excellence.

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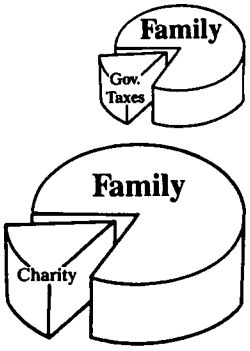

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And while it has usually been my task to defend community against the inroads made by society, it is task perhaps even more vital to defend society against the smothering affection of world communalism.

When men band together for a purpose, that purpose defines a competitive struggle for results both within the group and between groups. In a hunting party, it makes little difference who you are (which is really all that matters within a family); it is how good a shot you are, how good a tracker, that defines your status and prestige. The best and most experienced hunters are the leaders of the group, and groups that adopt some other principle of leadership—wealth, social position, good looks, cleverness—will inevitably lose out in the struggle with other groups that have stuck to the fundamentals. The free market—that amoral competition for economic success—is the preeminent modern institution of society, although it is continually being hampered and restricted by communalists who hate the very ideas of competition and excellence.

It is Eros and Eris, love and strife, according to the poet-philosopher Empedocles, that rule the world, and although I continue to advocate the primary claims of love as the most solid foundation of human morality, let me put in a word for strife, for competition, for emulation. Without strife, the striving for superiority over one's fellows, we should be condemned to the life of the Hopi who till the ground and so humiliate their adolescent males that all decent aspirations for success are either suppressed or perverted into envy and resentment.

Strife is not limited to personal conflict. It was strife that set Athens against Thebes and Sparta, Rome against Carthage, Siena and Pisa against Florence, Elizabeth I's England against Philip II's Spain. What, apart from appalling carnage, were the results? Virtually everything we celebrate as the highest products of our civilization: Attic drama, the Parthenon, Roman law and architecture, Dante and the Duomo, campanile, and baptistery at Pisa, Shakespeare and the Escorial.

But strife is responsible for a great deal more than beautiful poetry and magnificent buildings. It is only the competition within and between social groups that can ever counteract the universal tendency for power to rise to the highest level at which it can consolidate. The only writers who have fully appreciated the nature of political power have been the Italians: Machiavelli, Vilfredo Pareto, Gaetano Mosca; and their disciples and fellow-travelers: Georges Sorel, James Burnham, and Burnham's interpreter, Samuel Francis. In the Italian view, whatever the official form of a regime may be—monarchy, oligarchy, or democracy—the facts of the case will always turn out, upon examination, to reveal an elite class (or classes) that control the resources of society and government and manipulate them in their own interest. Pareto and Mosca were extremely skeptical of the prospects of democracy, which they made the mistake of viewing as the institutionalization of political equality, because they were aware of how easy it is to rig elections, control the press, and seduce the electorate.

But our own founding fathers were far from being the dreamy-eyed idealists that are portrayed in Harry Jaffa's never-ending stream of letters to *National Review*. Most of the founders were explicitly opposed to democracy both in its 18th-century and in its modern sense. Most of them were Republicans, whose greatest anxiety was over how to get around the well-known fact that all successful republics had been on a small scale. Even the 13 colonies—to say nothing of the vast expanse of North America—were too vast in extent, too varied in character for anything like a unitary government. Their solution was that federal union that perished in the War Between the States.

But quite apart from the federal principle, at least one of the founders shared the Italian understanding of power. Thomas Jefferson, the most practical and hardheaded of our national leaders, was fully aware of the centralizing tendencies of power. When the respectable element in New England took fright at Shays's Rebellion, Jefferson's cool response was the last word in Machiavellianism:

> God forbid we should ever be 20 years without such a rebellion. The people cannot be all and always, well informed. The part which is wrong will be discontented in proportion to the facts they misconceive. If they remain quiet under such misconceptions it is a lethargy, the forerunner of death to public liberty. . . . What country can preserve its liberties, if their rulers are not warned from time to time that their people preserve the spirit of resistance? . . . What signify a few lost lives in a century or two? The tree of liberty must be refreshed from time to time with the blood of patriots and tyrants. It is its natural manure.

These lines, so often taken as proof of Jefferson's Jacobinism, are in fact the best evidence for his political realism. It was only the struggle between states, classes, and interests that enabled Americans to preserve the liberties they had secured in an armed rebellion, and when one section and one class mustered the power to overwhelm its major competitor, it spelled doom not only for the federal system but, eventually, also for all those habits of liberty that had characterized American life.

Since the nervous edge of a civilization is primarily the result of competition, the suppression of social and political conflict has meant progressive decadence in American culture. We are doing our best, in this country, to strangle competition in every important endeavor. Apart from socializing and internationalizing our economy, we have reduced our public architecture to the lowest common denominator of the international style, taken away most market incentives from artists and writers by subsidizing prose poetry and performance art for which there is no market, and—this is the masterstroke—created a bureaucratic system of education whose intended effect is the elimination of that striving for intellectual distinction upon which all scholarship, philosophy, and literature ultimately rests. By the end of the century we shall be a nation of Hopi.

There are still sufficient remnants of that old America to keep this nation viable, partly because Americans tend to ignore politics and prefer to concentrate on their own lives, and partly because we have become in some measure American nationalists who can define ourselves as part of a body politic in competition with Japan or the Soviet Union. However, the New International Order will soon fix that. If,

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in the name of universal peace and freedom, we are free to suppress an Arab bully who represents no material threat to our security or vital interests, it is because we are willing to surrender huge portions of our national autonomy to the United Nations.

Do I exaggerate? Here is the language of the President's declaration of war—make no mistake about it, embargoes and blockades constitute acts of war—against Iraq as reported in the *New York Times*: "This morning the President received a letter from [blah blah blah] the Emir of Kuwait, requesting on behalf of the government of Kuwait and in accordance with article 51 of the U.N. Charter and the right of individual and collective self defense. . . . In view of the Emir's request, the President has decided that the United States will do whatever is necessary to see that relevant U.N. sanctions are enforced." George Ball, as enthusiastic as Jesse Jackson and Pat Schroeder about the American counter-invasion, declares (also in the *Times*) that "The legitimacy of what the United States is doing depends now on the Security Council resolution. It's a United Nations action."

The line taken by the administration is parroted everywhere: we are acting as the right arm of the United Nations, not in the interest of the United States. This argument has its advantages, as a justification, since unlike Europe and Japan the United States gets comparatively little of its oil from the Persian Gulf states and next to nothing from Kuwait. But now the cry goes up: let Europe and Japan pay for our invasion force. This is the depth to which we have sunk as a nation, that our greatest wish is to be paid mercenaries for Germany and Japan. But such is the tangle of motivations in which we ensnare ourselves, whenever we leave the main highway of national self-interest for a sentimental trip down the scenic route of international idealism.

Some of our internationalist posturing is no more than the knavish language of cynical politicians who want to keep the American economy fueled on cheap oil. My conservative friends have been telling me that George Bush is only dressing up his nationalism in sheep's clothing borrowed from the United Nations. Perhaps. But why, then, did we have to request U.N. approval for any naval action against Iraqi tankers? It took the Security Council a week to decide, and even then approval came at the price of a U.S. promise to hold its fire until diplomats had exhausted all possibilities of compromise. Besides, New York and Washington are full of business and political leaders who would like nothing better than to finish the job of tidying up the globe by snuffing out the last sparks of independence and initiative, at home and abroad.

It is for this reason that I prefer the old Adam of strife and carnage to the new Prometheus of peace and human rights. Better a world torn apart by Husseins and Qaddafis, better a war to the knife between the PLO and the Likud Party, between Zulus and Afrikaaners, than a world run by George Balls and Dag Hammarskjölds, because a world made safe for democracy is a world in which no one dares to raise his voice for fear that mommy will put you away some place where you can be reeducated.

Colloquies

by Martin Seymour-Smith

My friend, and what a word that is, in his trouble
Was abandoned, yet he admired her courage
And loved her more for what she had to do,
So that at night when he was reading
He found that her hands, red with his blood,
Were turning the pages; that she'd been standing
On the other sides of walls just before
He opened doors to meet with vacancy.
His books vanished, re-arranged themselves,
And one day his teaspoons
Marched away out into the street
Then back through the hall
And onto the draining board.
He did not wonder at all at this:
Being left had turned his world into magic.

I spoke to her,
For she was my daughter,
Could tell her only 'Anderson wrote
"Dreiser, the heavy-footed, had tramped
Through the real wilderness of puritan lies,
Making a pathway for us all."'

From his cold house he told me about his troubles
In long telephone calls, and I just listened.

Now I'm in my trouble, of a different kind,
Not abandoned, but bewildered, guilty;
And my world too is full of harrowed magic.
He doesn't even know who she is. Or does he,
And is all impossible love and yearning,
Not like anything else ever, or ever describable?
Not long ago I'd forgotten. But now I ask:
You, who are still young, tell me,
Is it a thing better to talk of only,
Never to try to enact?
What shall I do?
Am I fortunate only to be sick with
The healing disease of her rejection,
Or should I try to cure it?

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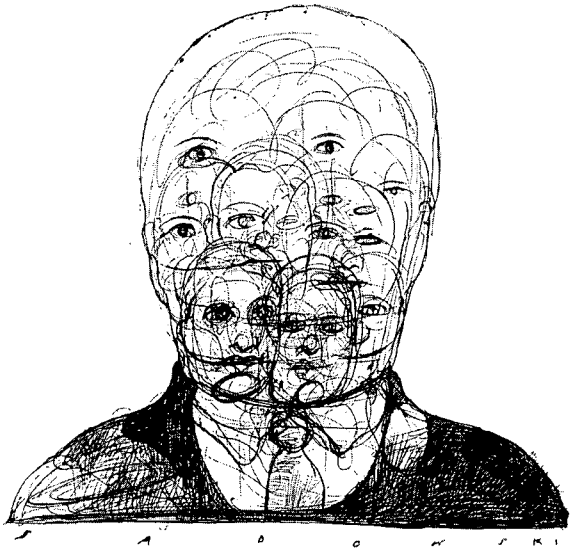

Wiktor Sadowski

The Future of American Nationalism

by Clyde Wilson

"All the evidence shows that differentiation which is not fragmentation is a source of strength. But such differentiation is possible only if there is a center toward which the parts look for their meaning and validation."
—Richard M. Weaver

One of the most interesting of many superb memoirs of the American Civil War is that of the erudite Confederate General Dick Taylor, called *Destruction and Reconstruction*. During the closing days of the war, Taylor found himself in command of the last remnants of organized Confederate troops in the Gulf states. After the surrender of the armies of Lee and Johnston and the capture of his brother-in-law President Davis, Taylor saw nothing for it but to open surrender negotiations with the nearest federal commander.

Hungry and shabby, he went to meet General Edward Canby under a flag of truce, and was received by that splendidly accoutred Union officer with quiet courtesy and respect. Conquered and conqueror sat down to a welcome breakfast. In his usual dry and understated way, Taylor remembered what happened next:

> There was, as ever, a skeleton at the feast, in the person of a general officer who had recently left Germany to become a citizen and soldier of the United States. This person, with the strong accent and idioms of the Fatherland, comforted me by assurances that we of the South would speedily recognize our ignorance and errors, especially about slavery and the rights of the States, and rejoice in the results of the war. In vain Canby and Palmer tried to suppress him. . . . I apologized meekly for my ignorance, on the ground that my ancestors had come from England to Virginia in 1608, and, in the short intervening period of two hundred and fifty-odd years, had found no time to transmit to me correct ideas of the duties of American citizenship. Moreover, my grandfather, commanding the 9th Virginia regiment in our Revolutionary army, had assisted in the defeat and capture of the Hessian mercenaries at Trenton, and I lamented that he had not, by association with these worthies, enlightened his understanding. My friend smiled blandly, and assured me of his willingness to instruct me.

Taylor was too much the gentleman to mention that the person to be instructed by the newcomer on the principles of Americanism was also the son of a President of the United States.

This small incident speaks volumes about the history and nature of American nationalism. (Nationalism I will herein consider to be a people's idea of themselves, their more or

Clyde Wilson is a professor of history at the University of South Carolina in Columbia and editor of The Papers of John C. Calhoun. *He is also author of* Carolina Cavalier: The Life and Mind of James Johnston Pettigrew, *reviewed in the October issue.*

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less conscious and public identity, which reflects their history and values. This is the implicit basis for their internal cohesion and their mobilized interaction with other nations. The experiences attendant upon interaction, friendly or unfriendly, with other peoples will play back and become a formative influence upon the sense of identity itself.)

One of the central features of American nationalism is that it has not only constantly evolved, but has undergone sea changes at least three times, though Americans are hardly aware of it, one indication of which is that very few could today sympathize with Taylor's viewpoint. When President Ronald Reagan celebrated America as a "City upon a Hill," a beacon to all mankind, he paid tribute to what he believes is a long-continued tradition of American prosperity, egalitarianism, and good works, without recognizing that the modern America he celebrates is something quite foreign and in many respects inimical to what the Puritan settlers of Massachusetts Bay in the 17th century had in mind when they expressed their aspirations to become a "City upon a Hill." This is perhaps as it should be, since nationalism is a mythology, a form of consciousness, the success of which is measured not by its historical accuracy but by its power to bind a given community into a common sense of interest and identity.

Yet if our goal is understanding the nature of American nationalism, and its relationship to the nationalisms of other parts of the world, it is necessary to take a historical view as well as describe the current consciousness. One thing is clear: American nationalism has always had about it, in its articulated aspects and compared to the nationalisms of Europe, something of the nature of a doctrine, a set of beliefs, as opposed to the allegiances of blood, dynasty, language, history, religion, and territory that form the core of European senses of national identity. Which is not necessarily to say that American nationalism has always lacked an ethnic and religious core or always been understood in terms of a universal to be applied to all mankind.

The 13 British colonies of North America that united to fight a successful war of independence and to found a constitutional federal union were quite diverse in their histories, economies, interests, and culture. What they shared in common was a British Protestant origin, a strong sense of the value of those inherited parts of British constitutional liberty and self-government that were most useful and pertinent to them, and the experience of the Revolution and Constitution-making itself.

A sense of American nationalism was not absent from the War of Independence, but it was relatively muted, especially in comparison to the nationalist outbreaks in Europe that began a few decades later. (Dick Taylor's German interlocutor was more than likely an offspring of the Revolutions of 1848.) And while Americans sometimes appealed to the opinion of mankind and thought of themselves as an example to peoples everywhere oppressed by arbitrary governments, they were not really universalists or egalitarians. Their attitude was more that of a younger son declaring his equality with his older brothers than of a revolutionary eager to impart "democracy"—a bad word to them—throughout the universe.

Neither their geographical situation—their isolation from the Old World and the prospect of a nearly empty continent to be settled—nor their inclination suggested to them any mission to expand democratic revolution to the world. They were, indeed, highly content with their own principles, prospects, and nature. It did not occur to them that they were Citizens of the World. Their British Protestant culture was nearly unremarked upon, not because it was rejected but because it was so taken for granted.

What held the American states together in a loose political unity was not nationalism but a constitutional settlement embodying federal republican principles. One of the implicit aspects of this settlement was that it was to preserve an already existent identity. (Americans still swear allegiance to the Constitution, not to the nation or to any explicit set of political dogmas.) This historical truth is little understood today. In fact official American belief regards the Declaration of Independence as the beginning of an endless process of active movement toward an ever-more egalitarian and universalist society. This is because of the intervention between us and the Founding Fathers of that sea change in the thinking of men that is summed up in the term "the French Revolution."

While Americans before the Civil War were often quite truculent in asserting their rights and honor over against other countries, and in upholding the superiority of their republican, constitutional liberties to arbitrary governments elsewhere, they were not nationalists in the sense that was later to be understood. There were in antebellum America no loyalty oaths or pledges of allegiance to the flag or the nation. Freeborn American citizens would have considered such to be an insult to their patriotism as well as an invasion of the rights of their states.

It is true that during the early 19th century rhetorical emphasis was increasingly laid on an idea of nationalism. New Englanders, who had always had the most organized sense of community and mission among Americans, strove, with a good deal of success, to promote New England ideals of the future of America, as those ideals had been transformed by the devolution of Puritanism into a progress-oriented economic system and by Transcendentalism, a German stepchild of the French Revolution.

Americans of other sorts were no less patriotic, and in fact were far more typical, but the New Englanders were the more articulate. The outcome of the Civil War completed a process by which the New England community, in an idealized form, became the prototype of Americanism, both at home and abroad. (For example, the first American dictionary, produced by Noah Webster of Connecticut, was not an American dictionary at all, but a New England dictionary, establishing spellings and pronunciations that were not at all typically American but which were proselytized as standards by subsequent generations of schoolmarms.)

Until the Civil War, nationalism was a sentiment with many different acceptable connotations. It was not an instrumental concept, except occasionally as an assertion against foreign interference. It involved no particular imperatives or organized missions, except as regarded the empty lands on the borders of the Union which might become future states. And even so, the westward movement was largely a matter of individual initiative, not national self-

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assertion.

It was in the crucible of the Civil War that the first American nationalism in the strict sense was formed. The Civil War has faded in memory and significance to generations of Americans who have seen two World Wars, a worldwide empire, and vast social changes. Yet the Civil War—in terms of the mobilization and casualties, and in terms of the consequences—is still the largest event in our history.

The central issue in the Civil War, to which all other questions, including slavery and centralization, were subordinate, was the movement of American society into modernization. Modernization, among other things, implies economic, political, and cultural centralization and nationalism. To modernization the divergent development of the American South presented a formidable obstacle. The South was vast, politically skilled, increasingly unified as the antebellum period wore on, and firmly opposed to both economic nationalism (in the form of protective tariffs, federal subsidies for the transportation infrastructure, free public lands, and a central banking system) and to cultural nationalism in its New England variety. Furthermore, it had the weight of prestige and tradition on its side in its appeal to the limited constitutional settlement, a tradition that at least latently counted on the allegiance of many Americans outside the South who were dubious about the effects of modernization.

It was during the Civil War, with the appeals to the Union as a mystic indissoluble bond, to unlimited exercise of power by the agents of a putative national majority, to loyalty oaths and the archetypal image of Uncle Sam, that American nationalism came into being. The outcome settled certain issues forever. The formerly plural United States was now a nation-state with a centralized economic policy under the aegis of a federal government restrained by no constitutional checks not internal to itself. Further, the course of the war had, if not universalized the concept of American citizenship, immensely broadened it. Contrary to widespread belief, immigration of new peoples into the United States had been a minor phenomenon in the early days of the Republic. (George Washington was already the fifth generation of his family in America.) Not until the 1840's did it become substantial. Among the major components of the new nationalism were the Irish and German immigrants, who indeed made the outcome of the Civil War possible.

Less important at the time and not originally intended as a consequence, but of immense importance to the future, was the emancipation and then enfranchisement of the Afro-American population, the first as a military measure and the second as a political necessity for the ruling party. Before the war no respectable Northern politician had dared suggest much more than a restriction of slavery in the territories, with a hint of a future gradual elimination of the institution, though without any concrete suggestion as to how this would be done or what would be the status of the freedmen.

Yet in the nationalist mythology that was formed in the struggle for the Union, next in importance to the Union itself and in time more important, was the moral imperative of equality and universalization of citizenship enshrined in the Fourteenth Amendment. The success of the new mythology has been demonstrated by the fact that while it is possible to criticize almost anything else in American history—the Constitution, George Washington, Franklin D. Roosevelt—it is nearly impossible to criticize, even on limited historical grounds, the righteousness of the movement for emancipation and equality for the freedmen. With the crusade for equality American nationalism had achieved not only its political and economic goals but had fashioned a moral imperative in compelling form.

But what emerged was a strange form of universalized democracy. Government of, by, and for the people had come to mean all people in a new and uniquely American way. This universal principle, however, existed in the quotidian context of an American society that was still overwhelmingly British Protestant not only in its composition but in its values and aspirations. In fact, the very aspiration of equal liberty and opportunity was itself a form of idealism that rested upon a peculiarly Anglo-Saxon heritage.

In the half century between the Civil War and the First World War, American nationalism was subjected to immense stresses. Regionalism did not disappear. The South, in some respects, remained obdurate, and the new states of the Plains and Rocky Mountains sometimes erupted in quite radical forms of populist revolt. More important were the stresses associated with the creation of a modern industrial nation-state, which tended to wipe away and recreate classes, localities, occupations, and ways of life. These stresses have been suffered by every modernizing society and in themselves are capable of great disruption. But in America, simultaneously with these vast social changes came another unprecedented dislocation: an immense immigration of new peoples from the east and south of Europe, altering the ethnic and religious composition of the population to an extent no other modern society had ever undergone.

History is always seeking new forms of equilibrium. Out of this social crucible came, uneasily and unevenly, a new form of American nationalism, which eventually established its hegemony. The settlement that emerged was part and parcel of the Progressive era. Progressivism was not simply the clear-cut reform movement of the history textbooks—it was a sea change in consciousness, the completion of a stage of mental modernization with vast and sometimes ambivalent and contradictory implications with which we are still living and which historians have barely begun to describe adequately.

The Progressive settlement that emerged, symbolized in different ways by such politicians as Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson and such writers as Herbert Croly and Walter Lippmann, had two aspects. Externally, it implied the emergence of the United States as a world power of the first class, along with Britain, France, and Germany. There might be disagreement about the exact implications of this and the policies to be pursued, but it was soon clear that traditional American isolation would give way to a determination to act aggressively on the world stage. In this situation, which had behind it the seeming force of inevitability, a spokesman for the older America like William Jennings Bryan could only appear as a hopeless archaism.

One of the more obviously observable internal results of

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the triumph of nationalist Progressivism was a change in the nature of American leadership. The old gentry, which had evolved leaders from the locality, had been supplanted by a national, even international, class of politicians, publicists, experts, intellectuals, and professionals who acted in many respects together, had, broadly speaking, common goals, and who considered themselves to be the natural masters of the nation. To a considerable extent the new nationalism was not a product of the grass roots but an ideology of the masters.

Another internal aspect of the new nationalism was "the Melting Pot." The Melting Pot was the American answer to the immense changes brought by the New Immigration. It had many aspects and could change its character depending upon which angle it was viewed from. It was amorphous enough to provide comfort both to the old stock American uneasy with the changes sweeping over his country and the immigrant uneasy with his place in the New World.

To the immigrant the Melting Pot offered opportunity and assimilation: Americanization, which would bring with it prosperity and full participation in democracy. To the old American it offered the prospect of melting down an alien mass into a form compatible with what he valued. It was a little unclear whether the immigrant would become in time an Anglo-American or whether all would become together something new. In this very vagueness was its strength.

There was about it something of the aspect of the old American imposing his culture on the newcomer as a condition of acceptance; this was to be accomplished chiefly in the time-tested ways that New Englanders had always proposed to tame wild Southerners and Westerners—through the public school, disciplined labor, economic progress, moral exhortation, and appeals to an idealism of American uniqueness. There was also about it an aspect of the immigrant himself contributing to a newly emergent culture. These ambiguities were not and never have been resolved. The power of the Melting Pot ideal is not in its logic but in its art, its ability to command common consent from diverse groups.

There were a number of concrete results of the process. Catholics and Jews, from being small tolerated minorities, became equal partners with Protestants in the American religious commitment. The British Protestants went from an overwhelming to a bare majority. Inherited differences in values, however, would inevitably complicate many areas of American life and politics—the form and function of city governments, the role of the public schools, the relationship of church and state, and perhaps most importantly, the national stance toward other nations, many of which were traditional homes or traditional enemies of large groups of voters. The debacle of Prohibition was one example of the ensuing mess. The politics of ethnic coalition was another.

Both the old American and the new American, to the extent they valued their own culture and religious forms, were bound to feel a certain uneasiness with the compromise that bound them together. Yet America provided a generally high standard of living, economic opportunity, vast elbow room, and freedom from the pressure for conformity that results from external threat. The nationalism that emerged from the Melting Pot was a resounding success of which Americans were justly celebratory. At its best it provided a graceful surmounting of problems such as no large society had ever faced and in the larger things showed a remarkable tolerance and cohesion. World War I revealed some, but not insurmountable, tensions. World War II consolidated the success of Americanization. A regiment of Japanese-American volunteers piled up an impressive combat record, and the Allied forces in Europe were led to victory by a German-American, Eisenhower. Americans were massively united, first in their reluctance to enter the war and then in their determination to win it.

Moreover, World War II, in the expansion of federal power and the mobilization of egalitarian sentiment against fascism, laid the basis for another major movement—the extension of *de facto* equality to the black Americans who had emerged from slavery some generations before. (It is wrong to say, in the often-used phrase, that the Civil Rights revolution was a completion of the long-deferred commitment to equality, because there never really had been any such commitment before, except in a very rhetorical, limited, and expedient sense.)

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Americans used to be unified by the Constitution—viewed largely as a negative restraint on government. But the Constitution now means whatever the most powerful and adept political forces want it to mean.

◆

During and after World War II, American society for the third time made a perilous leap into the cauldron of history, boiling down its existing consensus in the optimistic prospect of moulding itself into a newer and more daring form. The Civil Rights revolution and a radical alteration of the immigration laws were simultaneously undertaken in the 1960's. It was as if the Melting Pot, having proven itself able to boil down all of Europe, was now to test its capacity to do the same for the whole world. So natural and inevitable a next step in the progress of the success of American democracy did this seem, that it was hardly noticed. The almost complete triumph of the Melting Pot ideal is indicated by the fact that Americans, with no noticeable demurrer, celebrated the centenary of the Statue of Liberty not as a memorial to liberty but as a memorial to ethnic diversity.

The attempt to create a third form of American nationalism also had an external as well as an internal aspect. From an actor on the world stage America perforce became the leader of the world. Its prosperity, its security, its freedom from major internal stress, its tolerance, its confidence that the present is always better than the past and the future will always be better than the present, provided the model for the world, at least in the minds of its leaders.

For the first time the American leadership class, the politicians and intellectuals who were the inheritors of the Progressive era's belief in elite and expert rule, in technique,

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optimism, and progress, began to regard American success not as an end but as a means. The successful mobilization against the totalitarianism of the right, which they believed, perhaps mistakenly, to be a demon from the past rather than a portent of the future, proved to them the need and possibility for worldwide democracy on the American model—democracy conceived in terms of the American standard of living and middle-class civilities and technological expertise.

From the war onward the ideal of global democracy under American leadership and example provided the rationale for American interaction with the world. Its instruments were the United Nations and other international organizations, which were invested with the same mystic devotion that the concept of "Union" had once enjoyed; massive economic aid to bring the rest of the world up to American standards; and, less certainly, a determination to provide military security. This international mission was to be carried out at the same time reform at home—the Great Society, the Civil Rights revolution, and the opening of the borders—was to perfect the American example so there could not be left in the world any doubters of the sincerity and success of American equality and democracy.

In some respects, if not all, global democracy, which has remained the chief justification for American foreign policy under both Democratic and Republican, liberal and conservative administrations, is an elite ideology rather than a movement of the grass roots. Until the attack on Pearl Harbor, for instance, despite massive interventionist propaganda and a complete commitment to an antifascist crusade on the part of the leadership, Americans at large were overwhelmingly resistant to involvement in external quarrels. Following the war, the burdens of the Cold War were shouldered, but often quite reluctantly.

The ideology of global democracy left many Americans ill-prepared for the resistant reality of the real world. Americans, generally, could not understand how other peoples might regard what Americans considered as self-evidently generous assistance to be unwanted dictation—as, in fact, imperialism. Few Americans and no American leaders were able to conceive that the benefits of technology and the dollar applied to an undeveloped society did not always lead to unalloyed progress, as witness the disintegration of the viable tribal societies of black Africa without their replacement by anything stable or satisfactory. Similarly, the United Nations proved a disappointment to most of its devotees.

The great triumph over fascism was succeeded by the Iron Curtain, then by the draw in Korea, and then by the debacle of a high-minded effort to defend democracy in the formerly French colonies in Indochina. While American democracy might provide an appealing contrast to Soviet imperialism, it offered little guidance in dealing with militant fundamentalism in the vast Islamic world. The Afghans who resisted communism did not aspire to democracy but aspired, in a predemocratic way, to the preservation of their religion and way of life. And what was to happen to the idealism of global democracy when it was found that those foreigners one was called upon to defend from communism were not democrats but merely practitioners of an older and nearly as ugly if not quite as thoroughgoing a form of oppression as that against which they were fighting? Thus global democracy provided no basis for an anticommunist policy in Central America.

Despite these setbacks and confusions, global democracy has maintained a remarkable hold upon the imagination of the American leadership class. The real question is whether an insistence on applying the measure of democracy—conceived in a rather abstract and implicitly American way—really gives us an adequate basis for relationships with other peoples. One does not have to believe in a cynical foreign policy to be wary of a rather rootless and insubstantial form of idealism. This is as true after as before the dissolution of communism. Nor is it clear that the American public as a whole, as opposed to the leadership class, is really committed to a mission to defend and implement American-style democracy around the world. The felt necessity of the leadership to idealize every step as surrounded with an immaculate democracy has prevented any constructive American role in places such as Latin America, where democracy may be chimerical under any circumstances.

Global democracy may prove more dangerous to allies and neutrals than to enemies. Amazingly, the same American liberals who believe that America should not police the world when it is a question of an aggressor leftist regime, find no problem in subverting governments of the right—even though, presumably, such intervention is only morally justified by self-defense and regimes of the right, however distasteful, pose no threat to America. Thus, an ideology put forth by Reaganites as a defense against totalitarianism can just as easily, and without any change in assumptions, be used to undermine some friendly regime that some future Democratic administration finds inadequate by its standards of democracy—El Salvador, Chile, South Africa, or even Israel. Global democracy already has a substantial record of abandoning American allies.

Internally, American society is now engaged in an experiment to test the limits at which a coherent nationalism can be maintained in a democratic system by a shared doctrine of equality and prosperity, without any binding cultural, ethnic, religious, or ethical cohesion. The strategy of the leadership toward this problem is one of optimism. Refuse to recognize the problem and it will go away. Assume that it is already solved and it will be. Optimism, positive thinking, is one of the most characteristic of American traits and attitudes.

The history of America has been such as to provide a realistic basis for optimism. A good deal of national morale was restored during the Reagan years (though it remains to be seen how genuine and deep this restoration will prove under possible future stresses). There have always been naysayers and prophets of doom in the past and America has always ignored them and proved them wrong. There is no question that American society has already tested and transcended the limits of all previous experience in creating national unity out of diversity. Optimism, the expectation of the best, is in itself one of the causes of success, Americans believe, while pessimism is sure to find what it expects.

Yet the essence of statesmanship is to see and prepare for the dangers of the future. It is perhaps not too pessimistic to observe that the final answer is not yet in on the most recent

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and ongoing experiment in testing the limits of national cohesion. Vast segments of American society have been and are being Hispanicized and Asianized. No one knows what the long-range consequences of this will be. To some extent it works against not only traditional Western culture and religion, but also against liberal tendencies, such as separation of church and state and feminism. Many of the new immigrants bring value systems not wholly compatible with the traditional and prospective functioning of American society.

Many observers, including the New Immigrants themselves, question the ideal of the Melting Pot. Some regard it as an intolerable oppression to give up Spanish for English or abandon their traditional male supremacy for more egalitarian American standards. Egalitarianism among groups does not necessarily translate into liberty among individuals. And what is good for particular groups is increasingly substituted for what is good for society as a whole, even beyond the degree to which the ideal of democracy as a consensual compromise between various groups would allow. Striving for Americanization has been replaced by striving for status in a hierarchy of "victims."

A pessimist would point to the increasing attenuation of the values and institutions that used to provide unity in diversity. The decimated public schools no longer maintain a common standard of culture and values, or even a common standard of educational achievement. Americans used to be unified by the Constitution — viewed largely as a negative restraint on government. But the Constitution now means whatever the most powerful and adept political forces want it to mean, and is viewed primarily as an instrument to serve the interests of minorities of all kinds.

Amidst a general decline of morals and the traditional family, it is difficult to find any ethical standards that firmly bind most of the population, and society increasingly resorts to bureaucracy and legal hair-splitting to enforce behaviors that once were enforced by social pressure. No one knows how deeply the resentments of older Americans now run against the establishment policies of affirmative action (the old ideal of equal opportunity having been swiftly supplanted by one of special privilege), unlimited immigration, intolerable toleration of crime, and official hostility to Christianity. It is possible that these resentments are much deeper and more lasting than the insouciant leadership, choosing to ignore the problems except in election rhetoric, will admit. They may even be intensifying in a young population that no longer has the experience of real national unity.

Even so, by a curious paradox, it is the unprivileged groups who remain the most committed to an unquestioning American nationalism — that is, a real love of country that transcends the question of "What's in it for me?" Middle Americans, Southerners, the ethnic groups less officially recognized and privileged have responded most readily to the Reaganite formulation of American nationalism in terms of pride and opportunity.

A shared culture has in the past provided a basis for unity among people otherwise diverse. But the most enduring and valuable forms of culture, at least in their formative stages, are a product of homogeneity and stability. Americanization has tended to attenuate both high culture and folk culture. What has been gained in inclusiveness has been lost in focus. As Tocqueville and other early observers pointed out, the thrust of American democracy is toward standardization — a standardization that might be at a quite comfortable level but that tends to pull down the higher manifestations of culture.

Americans build splendid palaces in which to display the music and art created in other ages on other continents. Ours is a culture derivative and poured in from the top, not evolved from the grass roots, and it therefore has a limited power to bind. Without Southern and Jewish writers, both imperfectly Americanized, there would hardly be any American literature of world class in the late 20th century. The two most original forms of American folk culture, Southern black music (the various forms of jazz) and Southern white music ("country music") are being attenuated by standardization at the same time that they are admired around the world as both admirable and uniquely American.

To many the loss of some cultural coherence may be a small price to pay for a tolerant diversity, high standard of living, and democratic spirit, but culture is not only valuable in itself but makes up an essential binding ingredient that can hold a people together even under reverses and oppression. (The resurgence of Poland provides perhaps the most telling example today.) It may even be that, in the long run, a coherent culture is an *economic* necessity. ◇

After Memorial Day in the Brandywine Battlefield

by Ruth Moose

One sitting duck on a silver pond
circles cattails and jewelweed
beneath the bloom
of blackberry briars. Buttonwood trees,
hollow as caves were saplings under Lafayette,
whose headquarters is a shadow behind.
A dragonfly hovers like a helicopter
in the green and red sounds
of 9 A.M. traffic. On a floating limb
just below the freshet
where a redwing blackbird comes
to shower, sits a frog
the size of my thumb. He is bronze
as a medal, full of frog
and all the frogs before him,
not listening to the jugging,
like an orchestra of cellos,
from his father and uncles
around him. Future sounds
of gunfire like kettledrums
is held in the history
of stones who remember.
Frogs forget, forget, forget.

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Tragedy, Comedy, and Modern Times

by James Bond Stockdale

Wiktor Sadowski

This essay grew out of a request that I conduct a reprise of "The Bull's Eye of Disaster," my wrap-up conclusions on the Vietnam War that appeared in the August 1989 *Chronicles*, in light of what's happened in the post-Cold War world since that essay appeared. I was thus thrust onto the stage of modern times, to be whipped by the slipstream, or dust-cloud, of a fast moving *perestroika*, and probably be doomed to follow the example of the average op-ed writer of the past year—receiving praise for his right-sounding conclusions the day they came out, and being booed for sounding silly in light of the status of affairs a week later.

But this is a magazine, and I have more room to marshal pertinent explanations, to be cagey, and to stick close to what I believe to be solid ground. And the most solid continuum I can think of that connects what proved to be the mistakes of the Vietnam period and lurks as a constant danger of the post-Cold War period, is the bad habit of seeking the comfort of relying on the legitimacies and truisms of the past. Today to be swept up in rallying calls to "go to the defense of the brave freedom fighters of Lower Slobovia" (when the connection between such action and America's vital interests is hazy), is to answer the same siren song L.B. Johnson heard from the "Wise Men" he insisted on consulting at the decision point of Vietnam commitment. At that juncture, LBJ marshaled the idols of his youth, architects of American Cold War strategy in the late 40's, and put it to them: "Should I go in or not?" Spokesman Dean Acheson said that he had no choice except to press on, and with that his colleagues (John J. McCloy, Robert Lovett, and others) "came thundering in like the charge of the Scot's Greys at Waterloo." It was July 8, 1965, when the "Wise Men" said "go." Three weeks later, on July 28, LBJ doubled the draft call and added another fifty thousand troop increment. The latter marked the beginning of a regrettable trip down a long road.

America's trip down that road turned out to be a case study in how Cold War verities could wipe you out when applied to difficulties that were not generic to that 1947 model of a world in which two superpower ideologies were locked in eternal combat for world domination at center stage and all else was window dressing.

When the "Wise Men" spoke in July 1965, it had already been a long time since the world *was* that simple. Though the "best and the brightest" of the Vietnam buildup years left no evidence that they saw anything out there but one big monolithic communist menace, even I, insignificant fighter pilot Jim Stockdale, knew better than that in those days. In 1958, seven years before, thirty-two years ago last summer, a territorial squabble in the Far East, quickly and like a powerful magnet, drew instantaneous Soviet and American interest. China had commenced shelling two little offshore islands under *de facto* control of their enemy and America's ally, Taiwan. Under the Formosa (Taiwan) Resolution of 1955, America (the Seventh Fleet) was pledged to defend Taiwan against attack from the mainland—and the United States had reserved the right to repel Chinese boarders should they be landed on those two little offshore islands, Quemoy and Matsu. The Soviets and China had a mutual defense pact that would draw the Soviet Union into any fighting between China and the United States. I was operations officer of the lead Fighter Squadron on scene with the Seventh Fleet, aboard the aircraft carrier *Midway* that summer, and we flew daily over the Taiwan Straits staring down MIG pilots on similar standoff missions over those two little islands below us. World War III seemed imminent, as Soviet leader Khruschev ridiculed the power

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James Bond Stockdale was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor in 1976. With his wife, Sybil, he is the author of In Love and War. *Admiral Stockdale is a senior research fellow at the Hoover Institution at Stanford University. This article is adapted from a speech he gave under the auspices of The Rockford Institute in June.*

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of American carriers like my *Midway* in the press, boasting that he could dispose of such "pleasure boats" any time he chose.

Similarly, in daily press releases, Mao's China was spewing out rage at the Seventh Fleet's blocking action in the Taiwan Straits, and vowing to mount amphibious assaults to reclaim their "rightful possessions" offshore. To the man on the street, it was two on one, the Soviets and China in their mutual defense pact, ready to throw down the gauntlet in the face of the United States. At least that's the way it looked to me in the air every day, and that's the way it was projected in the world press.

Because I had to keep up with the state of play to brief my pilots, I spent most of my time between flights puzzling over the official classified message traffic pouring into the *Midway*'s command center from all over the world. And what an education that was for this then-thirty-five-year-old U.S. Naval officer! So help me, behind those closed doors, the Soviets and the mainland Chinese were starting to act like they were more angry with each other than either one was with us; it was becoming clear that the Chinese invasion was not going to take place. The Soviets, while bad-mouthing our Fleet's action in every press release, were behind closed doors harassing the Chinese to back down. What I was reading in the command center was telling me that the Soviets were more than happy to have the U.S. Seventh Fleet right where we were, keeping their "communist brothers" in check, and out of the Pacific Ocean. And what was clear to insiders, happened. The Chinese kept their fleets in port, and everything petered out in early fall.

I became so interested in the sort of things I had seen transpire that summer that I got the Navy to send me to political science graduate school at Stanford for my next shore duty. After a year of course work, I spent another in the library of the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace on that campus, pouring over modern Soviet and Chinese documents, learning of the details of what had been their secret split-up in 1957, shortly before my straits crisis, and writing a 1962 master's degree thesis I entitled "Taiwan and the Sino-Soviet Dispute."

After two years ashore, I then let the zigs and zags in that cauldron of intrigue between the Soviets and Chinese go its own way, as I turned down a Navy suggestion to stay at Stanford for a doctorate, and took a fighter squadron command the other side of the Navy house had ready for me. By February 1963, I was back flying those same F8 Crusaders—not over Asian islands, but over the Asian mainland of South Vietnam, from a different carrier, the *U.S.S. Ticonderoga*. And the rest, as they say, is history. I spent ten years in Vietnam, fired the shot that started the war in the North the next summer, got shot down after another year and a half of flying, rotted in jail for nearly eight years, and like all other American prisoners was freed in 1973 as a direct result of our beautiful B-52 bombings of December 1972.

It wasn't until three years ago, back at the Hoover Institution, now as a senior research fellow, that I ran into a man who was picking up what I would call practical Sino-Soviet scholarship where I had left it twenty-five years before. He, too, had fought the Vietnam War, boarding a plane heading there in December 1970 (just before my sixth Christmas in prison), as a twenty-three-year-old West Point graduate, to be posted to a tiny jungle outpost near the Cambodian border for his baptism of fire. Lieutenant F. Charles Parker left an America disillusioned by an indecisive war in its seventh year with a gut feeling that "something is wrong here." He fought well and ultimately came home feeling even more strongly that "something had been wrong." Staying in the Army, he had trod a tough 15-year path to find out, as best he possibly could, just what that "wrong thing" was, before I met him: that tough path took Parker through a Ph.D. in history from George Washington University and the study of both the Russian and Chinese languages. At Hoover on a one-year fellowship from the Army, *Lieutenant Colonel* Parker was putting the finishing touches on a book published last year: *Vietnam: Strategy for a Stalemate*. In a nutshell, he starts out by clarifying some points that are overdue to be made, that the war was played against a larger backdrop than just preserving the freedom of the South Vietnamese. From his introduction:

> The United States wanted to preserve an independent non-communist South Vietnam. But more than the welfare of the people in Vietnam had to have been at stake for the United States to commit an army to combat in Asia. The United States thought it was containing communism in general and Chinese communism in particular when it developed an open-ended commitment to the Republic of Vietnam. The Soviet Union made a fundamental commitment to supply North Vietnam with the military matériel that gave the North Vietnamese the capability to match the American buildup. Without Soviet support, the North Vietnamese could not have escalated the level of conflict. Yet the reason the Soviets bore the costs and took the risks had less to do with Vietnam and more to do with China.

Soviet aid had all to do with their trying to reestablish the Sino-Soviet relationship that Mao had begun to rupture in 1957—specifically, to drive China into their own arms again by keeping the Vietnam War heated up to a certain critical temperature (which they could monitor and more or less control with their aid to the North), which would multiply and strengthen the pro-Soviet population of China out of fear of U.S. incursions near their borders. Khruschev was trying to provoke a Sino-American—not a Soviet-American—confrontation over Vietnam. In doing this, he was combating a Mao zigzag that from 1960 onwards had seen to it that Chinese policy was driven by the goal of improving relations with the United States as a way to shuck dependence on the Soviets. Putting all this together, Parker's point of departure is a Johnson administration, spearheaded by Robert McNamara and Harvard's "best and brightest," rushing American troops forward to contain a Chinese communism that didn't need to be contained, indeed a China that was, even at the time McNamara was demanding the deployment of more troops than the American Army could accommodate in South Vietnam, sending tacit signals (missed by a tone-deaf American State Department), begging for an American rapprochement of the sort

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Richard Nixon later brought into being.

The irony of all this, insofar as *my* story goes, is not so much the injustice of it all, as the self-inflicted wound our leaders put on us by staking out at the outset great precautions against arousing the Chinese tiger to act as it did in Korea—to enter the fray and directly attack the American forces. Totally ignoring the effects of *the* political event of the era, before *perestroika*, the Sino-Soviet split, America stuck to pre-split logic, Cold War imperatives, and nonsensically gave up the Hanoi bombing option as of 1964 and in doing so lost the whole ball game.

As my reprise of my "Bull's Eye of Disaster" article I'll simply say that its main thrust was that contrary to the view that some insist on grinding into the history books—*i.e.*, that our Vietnam experience was a one-of-a-kind mixup in which our civilian and military leaders misjudged the nature of the problem, and once in, sank into an unexpected quagmire that was beyond almost anybody's practical control—the fact was that few military men who were making policy before our troops started in had any doubt in their minds that the U.S. Army moving into South Vietnam was a very bad idea. The official Joint Chiefs of Staff position flatly opposed the idea of American ground troops being deployed into the jungles of Southeast Asia. In their November 1964 rebuttal, when they were being pressured to send them there anyway, their statement was as follows: "Instead of working to buttress the South Vietnamese government in order to defend itself, the United States should take stern actions against North Vietnam to make that defense needless."

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Though the "best and the brightest" of the Vietnam buildup years left no evidence that they saw anything out there but one big monolithic communist menace, even I, insignificant fighter pilot Jim Stockdale, knew better.

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What they had in mind was precisely what was successfully done nine years later—fifty-eight thousand dead American bodies later: seal off all transportation of goods into or out of Hanoi by seriously, heavily, for hours at a time, bombing their dock and rail yards and mining their harbors, particularly that of their major port city of Haiphong. I was in Hanoi when that bombing finally started and I heard that city—which for years had generated a carnival atmosphere with loudspeaker music in the streets between sporadic tactical (small planes, quick strike) raids—*go dead silent*. And frequently in those few days I was eyeball to eyeball with those North Vietnamese authorities whose habits and personalities I had studied closely throughout seven and a half years as their prisoner. In that time they lost heart, evincing fright, despair, even solicitousness. The bombardment was accurate and the casualties light (dozens rather than the thousands per day common in World War II). But implicit in the bombardment's persistence and power (the earth shook and the plaster rained down in buildings five miles from the impact areas), was the inevitability of its prevailing. Anyone there knew that but for American humane intentions, the bombsight reticles could be skewed a few degrees and everybody in that city would be dead by sunrise. That realization broke the will of a government, and that's what war is all about. In only 11 days, the bombs stopped, and we shouted to one another: "Pack, we're going home." There was no question that we had witnessed a surrender. And not a question in anybody's mind that the same thing could have been accomplished in any 11-day period in the previous nine years.

Why did we send *troops* in, when heavy B-52 bombing of Hanoi could have won the whole ball game in a few days? It was the only approach left after "the best and the brightest" had set their conditions back in those crucial days of 1964: no bombing of Hanoi/Haiphong area, no harbors mined, no reserves called up, yet victory before the American elections of 1968.

So we were "in" with the ground troops, on LBJ's orders and the concurrence of the "Wise Men," but winning was another thing. McNamara kept score on that with his production-line number crunching efficiency. He came up with what he called the "crossover point" as the key variable of his figuring, and the crossover point was that point in time when our killing rate started exceeding the enemy infiltration rate. He had it figured out that this crossover had to be accomplished by such-and-such a date or the war would spill over into the American elections of 1968, yet another "no-no" political restriction that was part of the "best and brightest" restriction package. To check where he was on the crossover point problem, he assigned intelligence forces to submit enemy troop counts in South Vietnam every so often. He would bang these numbers against his "body counts" and see "how it was going" on his "howgozit" curves. It was a grim business, and the more he got into it, the more his figures showed we were losing by the indices he had invented. (Those pesky Soviets were outfitting new soldiers up north faster than we could kill them down south.)

Well, you know the story. One sad fallout was that after months of badgering the Army to get more and more troops into the south to make his "howgozit" curves turn up toward paper victory, he privately and very early—Parker says October 1966, McNamara's depositions for Westmoreland's trial of CBS show late '65—wrote the war off as a loss. Think of all those who went over and died *after* his war machine had canceled out all plans for victory. But LBJ's official point of despair had to await the blessing of the "Wise Men" again. They met in March of 1968, and the same ones that had said "get in" in July 1965 now said "get out." At their afternoon session, Acheson tried to blame the getting in as well as the losing on the Armed Forces. The chairman of the Joint Chiefs said his group had not only recommended against the Army going into South Vietnam but had never been polled to check agreement with contrary orders to do so from above. Bad Blood. Bad War. *Bad Idea to seek advice from has-beens*—particularly when they had become famous using assumptions that no longer apply.

My friend Bill Crowe—sworn into the Navy at my side

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at Annapolis in 1943, ultimately to rise to become chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in time to face *perestroika* when it was new—told me that one of the best things about the total newness of it all was that there was no man in the world to whom George Shultz could turn for advice. He said you were just asking for trouble if you started fumbling around with somebody locked into Cold War—particularly *old* Cold War—ideas.

I know Bill well enough to know that he did not mean he advocated some kind of "new age" thinking, or new moral codes, or that he thought there was any metamorphosis of human nature going on about the world. He was talking about the wheels-spinning—and sometimes hard feelings—of getting mixed up with people who are out of it tactically. (On football tactics I mentioned some thoughts of my old friend Woody Hayes to my new friend Bill Walsh a few years ago when he had me traveling with the 49ers, and got a dose of those same vibes. Good parallel: Acheson was to Shultz as Hayes was to Walsh.)

What about case studies of post-Cold War temptations to make knee-jerk commitments of American will, treasure, and perhaps blood, in support of those who cry out in freedom's name? The Tiananmen Square episode in China and the Lithuanian separatist efforts are typical of what we can expect more of, but thankfully not very exciting to recount from the American scene because President George Bush has had the good sense not to overreact to significant public cries for "action."

My reaction to such episodes is permanently affected by my firsthand observations of human nature in prison. The drive by the timid to become "part of the action" when monolithic power blocs start to give ground is I believe a perennial trait of human response to unexpected restraint on the part of the mellowing vicious. Their cries are particularly appealing to Americans who remember inscriptions on such monuments as the Statue of Liberty, and national policies that had applicability in the past (the Truman Doctrine comes to mind), and who feel awkward and ask themselves "why are we just standing around?" when distant cries for rallying against tyranny are heard. Intervention, when long-term trends bode improvement, and particularly in the absence of a clear-cut serving of our national interest, is in my mind foolhardy. A true story might make my views understandable.

What we faced in the prisons of primitive communist North Vietnam was a twisted version of the confinement regime of their own convicted civilian enemies of the state, as they were kept in the high security prisons of that hybrid Asian/Marxist culture. We and their lifers had really two things in common: first, we had *no rights*. It sort of took you aback no matter how many times you heard it—and it was often said in response to our demands for such basic minimum standards as food, water, air, the sight of another American, a torture-free existence. But "you have no rights" was *not* shouted as though it was a just retribution for being a war criminal—it was said calmly, often with bemusement, by a commissar truly perplexed to think that any criminal could imagine a just prison being operated otherwise.

Surprised that I use the word "criminal" without a little speech about the moral indignation of it all? They pretty much beat that out of you. They couldn't make you feel like you *were* one, of course, but you just have the strength to stand on your dignity on a finite number of issues, and generally speaking, this one was a wheel spinner. The second thing we were told we had in common with domestic criminals was a *severe social maladjustment*, and that the purpose of our imprisonment was to rid us of our chronic propensity for antisocial behavior. In any sort of argument, the relationship between us and our interrogators was held to be the same as the relationship between us and our psychiatrists back home. This last idea comes from the Marxist-Leninist side of their house, of course. The idea of no human rights for evildoers might come from the oriental tradition. We got used to the idea that the whole regime was a kind of weird amalgamation of those two orientations.

I said this was a twisted version because they had a third, payoff side, to this thing of holding American prisoners: we were to be manipulated and used as propaganda agents, suppliers of military secrets, and informers on one another (organized resistance was the highest crime in their book). So they kept the natural leaders in solitary, and through a trip-wire system of interwoven absurd regulations (like never communicating with an American not your cellmate) they devised "punishment" regimes for those caught in violation—which were in effect private torture sieges for extracting military information, propaganda statements, and details of the prison underground. Not much new in the above for most of you. But how did American prisoners respond in this regime?

Very few acted dishonorably, that is, as informers on fear alone, without torture. The ringleaders of our underground resistance were another special breed, and of course on the completely opposite end of the behavior spectrum. For numbers, I'm talking maybe 2 percent informers, and 10, or more like 8 percent true hard-line ringleaders, plotters, and implementers of tactics for the captor's biggest "no-no," organized resistance. The Vietnamese had names for these groups. The first were "willings," the latter "diehards." The big third category, the broad floating majority, the Vietnamese called (optimistically) "partial willings." From the Vietnamese viewpoint, the "willings" were in their pocket, the "diehards" were hopeless—ultimately to be exiled into old French outlying dungeons rehabilitated for that purpose, and the "partial willings" (even after three or four years of punishment and coaxing), were still considered unreliable but worth working on. (By these identifiers, they had constructed a model of a Marxist society—the middle group *had* to be worth working on or their revolutionary theory was invalid.)

Actually, as the diehards saw them, "partial willings" were, first and last, the broad target group we were continually trying to rally into our fold, though their personalities and drives varied all the way from near-diehards to the honorable timid, who would go along with organized resistance but would seldom instigate it.

Did the diehards accomplish anything? Yes; they were the soul and conscience of the prison society. They included the men who commanded the prison underground (these were the seniors, but not *all* the seniors). *And* they included self-selected standout juniors who goaded the ringleaders into ever-strengthening the rigor of our rules of minimum

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standards of prisoner conduct, pretty much ran the clandestine communication system that made a prison society possible, planned and executed escapes, started riots on signal, and generally charged the bull head-on without compunction. When the diehard underground choked up the system, had everybody refusing to do the same things and thus shutting down the propaganda factory (nobody but "willings" to be put before visiting dignitaries at press conferences), there were purges, where all diehards (remember, I'm only talking maybe 25 or 30 out of maybe 300 people), were illuminated and frequently had their bones broken.

Over a period of months in 1970, it became clear to all—not by announcement, but by deduction—that North Vietnam had given up torture as a matter of policy. Whether the diehards or outside forces brought this about is a question, like the one Gorbachev brought up at Stanford University about who won the Cold War, that *is* still open for wrangling. This move came hard to the head commissar who, though left in office, became a scapegoat for his ultimate failure to deliver mobs of chanting "American prisoners against the war" for Western consumption via North Vietnamese movie cameras. I and other diehards knew this head commissar and his top henchmen well. Late in the tough period, he had visited us regularly at a special "dark place" prison where most of us were by then confined in solitary and leg irons. "There are new rules, Sto-dale," he told me, "but I have been assured that I can always demand respect and personal dignity." And he knew that I knew him well enough to know exactly what he meant by those words.

And then what happened? Something I was totally unprepared for. After gradual liberalization in our several prisons, the Son Tay raid of helicopter-borne American commandos against one of those prisons—unluckily for us, abandoned—frightened the Vietnamese so much they crowded us into the large cell blocks of the big downtown Hoa Lo penitentiary. After a week of sheer elation as we greeted each other after years of separation, some of our American troops showed signs of growing restlessness in this life of practically assured torture-free ease. Pockets of self-styled "freedom fighters"—and the following not being contrived, but being absolutely true—composed of the most timid and laid back of the "partial willings" we had unsuccessfully been trying to arouse for years, demanded a standoff show of force in the name of liberty.

The "church riot" of 1971 was their game plan. Believe it or not, though through the *great* and *fast* changes in the confinement regime of the previous weeks, we were being allowed to live together, 60 or 70 to big old cell blocks, the communists decreed that though we could converse freely in small groups, no one person could ever address a cell block population as a whole. (This regulation readily connects with their fear of those who, in their words, "have the innate ability to influence others," and their fear of organized resistance.) But of course among the precluded activities were formal church services for the whole cell block—so church was chosen as a vehicle of defiance.

Us diehards were not congenitally built to talk our comrades out of spirited action, but we tried. "You can't stand prosperity," I told them. The diehards knew the commissars firsthand, and we knew in ways we could not explain to these neophytes fighting at last for their place in the sun, that a reactionary crackdown that could set us back at least a year was inevitable.

I never learned so much about human nature so fast as I did that week as I watched the pressure building up—the timid sitting in corners delivering "give me liberty or give me death" lectures to one another. They had not allowed their frustrations to be relieved in the defiant abandonments of the riots and face-offs when we had something to gripe about during the hard years, but now that the word was out that the jailers had been de-fanged, *they would be heard.* One was known to shout "Screw Ho Chi Minh!" whenever the guards would deliver food. The old diehards shook their heads, half-snickering, half-griped, realizing we were sitting on a bomb awaiting detonation for no purpose.

The riot was staged and it happened. The Vietnamese could easily sense its coming. They burst in, bayonnets fixed, wearing masks to counter the tear gas that poured from the upper windows. The prison was clamped down. The next morning the prison yard was filled with fist-clenched and shouting civilians, standing room only (we were right downtown; they had heard the riot and were being spurred on to counter-riot by their political cadres). The door of the cell block swung open, the names were called out by the supervising officer. "Sto-dale" was number one, followed by the senior ringleaders—most of whom already had had up to four years solitary as compared to a cell block average of about six months (the Vietnamese couldn't believe anybody could rally our compatriots but us). We few were bound in ropes and handcuffed, paraded through the crowd, swung at, spat upon, then blindfolded and taken back into the dungeons to be clamped back in leg irons for several more months.

Counter-riots back in the big cell blocks? Not a one. Dead silence. We later got word that playing cards had been issued and that now bridge tournaments were becoming the thing.

This true story of human nature has stayed with me—believe me, not with a sense of personal bitterness, but with thanks for the opportunity to receive that rare education that allows me to better understand some of the events that are going on in many parts of the world today. ◇

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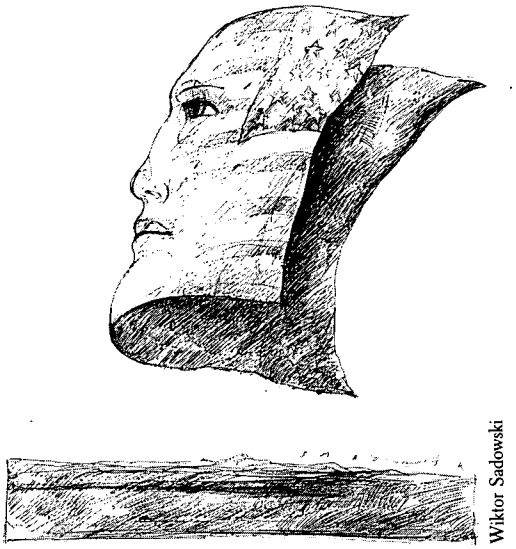

Wiktor Sadowski

National Service

by Theodore Pappas

"I call, therefore, a complete and generous education, that which fits a man to perform justly, skillfully, and magnanimously, all the offices, both private and public, of peace and war."

—John Milton

National Service: Pro & Con
Edited and introduced by Williamson M. Evers
Stanford: Hoover Institution Press; 261 pp., $21.95 (cloth), $14.95 (paper)

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On February 25, 1906, to a full assembly at Stanford University, William James gave his most famous speech, "The Moral Equivalent of War." James coined this phrase to contrast the noble and heroic human qualities that war evokes with the destructive purposes they most often serve. In James's view there were many values of military life that were worth preserving if not encouraging, such as "intrepidity, contempt for softness, surrender of private interest, obedience to command," all of which "remain the rock upon which States are built." James even suggested the conscription of youth into national service for the purpose of inculcating these "martial virtues":

> To coal and iron mines, to freight trains, to fishing fleets in December, to dishwashing, clothes-washing, and window-washing, to road-building and tunnel-making, to foundries and stoke-holes, and to the frames of skyscrapers, would our gilded youths be drafted off, according to their choice, to get the childishness knocked out of them, and to come back into society with healthier sympathies and soberer ideas.

These martial virtues, concluded James, though "originally gained by the race through war, are absolute and permanent human goods."

Many in America today hold a similar belief, that our country's sense of citizenship has deteriorated to such an extent that only by mobilizing our youth for a moral equivalent of war can we hope to reinstate a sense of civic duty. The Hoover Institution Conference on National Service, held September 8-9, 1989, brought together a panel of both the leading critics and proponents of national service, and *National Service: Pro & Con* is a collection of the papers and comments made at the conference. As Williamson Evers writes in his introduction, the debate can be summarized as "opposing libertarian and communitarian ideologies": those who oppose national service emphasize individual rights, constitutional protection, and free market economics; and those who favor it stress civic virtue, citizenship, and community service as a common duty of all. To the Hoover Institution's credit, no other book has ever presented as balanced a picture of the national service debate. The polemics are intelligently drawn and eloquently stated, and the frank and free fashion in which the issue is debated is a treasure rarely found in contemporary American discourse.

Anyone who doubts that this is an issue whose time has come should simply take note of the number of bills recently proposed in Congress. In

Theodore Pappas is the assistant editor of Chronicles.

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1989 alone, nine bills in the Senate and eleven in the House proposed some sort of national service. President Bush's $25 million Youth Engaged in Service (YES), the least ambitious plan of national service, would create a Points of Light Foundation to grant tax funds to promising private organizations and public service programs. The most ambitious plan, the bill that has drawn the most attention and the one to which virtually all of the Hoover panelists addressed their arguments, was drawn up by the Democratic Leadership Council (DLC) and introduced into Congress as the Citizenship and National Service Act of 1989 by Senator Sam Nunn (D-Georgia) and Congressman Dave McCurdy (D-Oklahoma). The *New York Times* called this $13 billion proposal "the catalyst" of the current national service debate.

The Nunn-McCurdy bill proposed a voluntary program of national service that would encompass both civilian service and citizen soldiery. Individuals who had completed high school with a diploma or its equivalent could either enlist in the armed forces for two years of active duty or work for one or two years in a Citizen Corps for $100 a week plus health insurance valued at $1,100 a year. Charles Moskos—a sociologist at Northwestern University and one of the nation's leading proponents of national service—believes there are 3.5 million positions open each year that are ideally suited for unskilled Citizen Corps volunteers, particularly in "education, the health sector, and child care, but several hundred thousand youth could be employed in such fields as conservation, criminal justice, and libraries and museums."

All participants in the Citizen Corps would receive a $10,000 tax-free voucher for each year of service, which could be used for college tuition, career training, or a down payment on a house; a two-year stint in the armed forces would entitle the volunteer to a $24,000 tax-free voucher. After a phase-in period of five years, all federal funds for student aid would be tied to this program; in other words, student loans and grants would be contingent on national service.

The Hoover debate highlights the principal objections to this program. Policy analyst Bruce Chapman and economist Walter Oi demonstrated that the national service volunteers enrolling in the military track would actually be earning a higher salary than regular military recruits—hardly an incentive "to be all you can be." Milton Friedman, not surprisingly, objected to any form of national service. Besides questioning the voluntariness of these *voluntary* programs—"Is it voluntary for me as a taxpayer when my money is used for the purpose of promoting somebody else's concept of national service?"—he argued that the law of unintended consequences forever works overtime in national politics, that large, federally-run projects are doomed to be perverted into pork barrels of corruption. He, among others, also questioned the "opportunity costs" of such initiatives, the cost of foregoing whatever else our young people could be doing in lieu of sweeping floors for Uncle Sam, to which proponent Amitai Etziono responded: "I could accept people working less for McDonald's and more for the conservation corps."

The deficit crisis stalled the DLC plan in late spring of 1989, whereupon Senator Nunn and others began speaking of a small trial run of the project. Virtually every proposal of national service ever made has suddenly been resurrected for inclusion in this $300 million experiment. Programs by Barbara Mikulski, Christopher Dodd, and Edward Kennedy have been combined with the Volunteers in Service to America, Retired Senior Volunteer, Foster Grandparent, and the Senior Companion programs and included in this new omnibus bill. It is difficult to disagree with Bruce Chapman's observation that what is now at work is that "great stove of government expansionism where many a pot of old liberal porridge is kept on the back burner until it can be brought forward and presented as nouvelle cuisine."

But perhaps what is most interesting about the Hoover debate is not so much what was discussed as what the panel refused to discuss: the idea of a mandatory system of national service. "No one is talking about compulsion. There is no bill currently in Congress that is compulsory," said Peter Szanton. "Emphatically rejected by all but a handful, politically speaking [compulsory service programs] are nonstarters with about as much appeal as concentration camps," stated Martin Anderson. Yet, as many proponents have pointed out, such an idea is not necessarily a nonstarter with the American people. As Mr. Moskos cites in *A Call to Civic Service*, recent Gallup-Harris polls show that the public has consistently supported the idea of national service, and that a majority of respondents even favor *compulsory* service. But regardless of public opinion, think tanks and scholars should never allow politics or political expediency to set the parameters of debate. The Hoover debate reminded me of a 1988 conference on the future of Europe, where a State Department analyst discounted a paper contemplating a unified Germany because "that's outside the scope of our agenda."

In fact, the history of Germany—more specifically Prussia—offers salutary lessons on this question of national service. In the six years between the Treaty of Tilsit of 1807, which reduced Prussia to a virtual vassal of France, and Napoleon's defeat at Leipzig in 1813, a small band of soldiers and civil servants initiated one of the most ambitious and successful periods of reform in European history. To circumvent the stipulation in the Treaty of Tilsit that forbad Prussia an army larger than 42,000, as well as to devise a system for the training of replacements for war, the Prussians instituted the *Krümpersystem*: the rotation of small groups of young men into military service for short periods of time. This allowed Prussia to train a larger number of men in the use of arms than treaty stipulations allowed; it also contributed to the fervid sense of citizenship that swept through Prussian society in the wake of reform.

Prussia's revolt against Napoleon in December 1812 set the stage for another military innovation. To defend itself against French reprisals Prussia mobilized a *Landwehr*, a civilian militia of territorial units of all able-bodied men between the ages of 18 and 45. The *Landwehr* was a citizen army with its own leadership and officers. Its members were not split up and sent to the front as replacements for the regular army, but rather fought alongside the regular regiments with separate designations and distinct uniforms. In

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June 1813 it was suggested that the *Landwehr* be integrated into the general army, and the suggestion was flatly rejected. The integrity of the *Landwehr*, and the idea on which it was based—that a community is best defended by its own citizens—were to be preserved.

This idea played no small role in the military superiority of the German Armed Forces (the *Wehrmacht*) of World War II. As evidenced by rates of casualties, the Germans fought twice as well as the Americans and the British and four times better than the Russians. This military tenacity has often been attributed to the strong political convictions of the German Army, to the power of the ideology of National Socialism. But as many studies have pointed out, particularly Edward Shils and Morris Janowitz's "Cohesion and Disintegration in the *Wehrmacht* of WWII," political ideology actually played a minor role in the solidarity of the German Army.

What the German Army realized is that a soldier's loyalties belong first and foremost to the immediate members of his community. This was the reason for Germany's regional recruitment, or "national units." From divisions on down the German Army was based on homogeneous, national groupings; Prussians served with Prussians, Bavarians with Bavarians, Saxons with Saxons, and so forth. There was a high degree of cohesion in the national units of the *Wehrmacht*, and desertions and surrenders were virtually unheard of. Desertions and surrenders were quite common, however, in the *Volksdeutsche*, the ethnically heterogeneous units in which Austrians, Czechs, and Poles were randomly mixed.

This understanding of the importance of community ties lay also at the heart of Germany's system of troop rotation. In contrast to America's system, which undermined a unit's sense of community with the constant infusion of replacements and raw recruits, Germany rotated troops and reinforced the front by moving in entire divisions, thus maintaining the camaraderie of the units that had trained, fought, and suffered together. This system of rotation prevented the *Wehrmacht* from experiencing what became evident among some American soldiers by the end of WWII and became endemic among soldiers in Vietnam: the narcissistic state in which camaraderie is supplanted with the all-encompassing concern for "saving your own skin."

A country that consciously disregarded this appreciation of community was Italy. Victor Emmanuel II's Minister of War, General Manfredo Fanti, saw military recruitment as an opportunity for engineering a vast melting pot of cultures. As with the American military draft of the 1950's and 60's, which took a black car salesman from Detroit and a white miner from Appalachia and shipped them to California to serve alongside an American Indian from Arizona, Fanti's goal was to strip individuals of all personal identities and community ties and to impose upon them a new and improved cultural consciousness. Recruits were yanked from their communities and forced to serve in strange environments with ethnically mixed regiments. A successful amalgamation of cultures, however, was not the result. Cultural differences remained, and personal hatreds and sectional discord were fueled rather than suppressed. As John Whittam concluded in his study of the Italian Army, this experimentation with social engineering and indoctrination did more to hinder than to help the cause of Italian unification.

The organization and administration of the German Army were clearly designed to meet the social, cultural, and psychological needs of the individual soldier. It was an understanding and appreciation of the ideology of *Gemeinschaft*—not the ideology of National Socialism—that produced the power, persistence, and perseverance of the *Wehrmacht*.

There are proponents of national service who would disregard these German lessons and opt instead to follow Italy's lead. For the Benjamin Barbers of the national service debate, a national purpose could be imposed from above. Through mandatory "citizenship training" and "civic education" a new cultural consciousness could be concocted for the creation of a kinder and gentler New American Man. But if we walk down this road pioneered by Italy, we should be prepared to pay the same price. Italy is not, and never has been, a unified country, and its many attempts at social, political and cultural unification have exacerbated rather than extinguished its national discord. A system of national service built on ideological indoctrination would merely be the latest attempt to destroy and homogenize local diversity and regional uniqueness.

Manfredo Fanti, however, need not be our point of departure. Through a respect for regional diversity and a cultivation of community ties, a worthy system of national service might be possible. What follows, therefore, is a sketch of what might be the least potentially harmful and the most potentially beneficial plan of national service.

We could call it YSCC, Youth in Service to Community and Country. It would be mandatory for all eighteen-year-old males and voluntary for all females. Such a program would avoid the blatant inequity of a voluntary system of national service tied to federal college aid, in which the burden of service falls squarely on the middle class and neither the rich nor the poor end up serving: the former because they don't need the money and the latter because college is alien to their socio-economic culture. Mr. Moskos has argued that tying national service to federal financial aid would actually widen rather than restrict access to higher education, because currently "the prospect of student-incurred debt is undoubtedly a major factor in the declining number of poor youth entering and completing college." But the duties and responsibilities of citizenship would still remain on the backs of those in our communities who are most in need, while no service would be required from the rich and privileged.

National service could not, however, ever be *mandatory* for women, unless we as a country want the responsibility for the care of the thousands of babies born annually to unwed teen mothers. Besides, considering our heightened concern for rape and sexual abuse of any kind, there is indeed something "frightening," to quote Margaret Mead, about the "picture of girls at eighteen, lined up, stripped, weighed, examined, within the brutal disregard of human dignity characteristic of the boot camp."

What would distinguish this program from other proposals is the degree to which both compulsion and autonomy are worked into the system.

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All eighteen-year-old males, or all males upon graduation from high school, could be required to give one year of service. They would first be required to participate in a three-month period of military training, in a boot-camp type of environment. (It appears that any compulsory system of national service that did not mandate some sort of military service would be in violation of the Thirteenth Amendment's ban on "involuntary servitude"; in other words, a compulsory system solely of civilian service would most likely be declared unconstitutional.) The training could occur at the local high schools, or at a designated locale in the community where a number of high schools would congregate to train together. The military personnel and matériel needed for training could be provided by the local or county National Guard. The participants would remain in their community, be trained alongside their friends, at already existing local facilities. There would be no classes on "civics," no lectures on "citizenship," and no one would be uprooted from his home and shipped a thousand miles away for a "sensitivity seminar" on pluralism, globalism, or victimology.

At the end of the three months of military training, the participants would be given information for deciding how and in what capacity they would like to serve the remainder of their nine months of service. They would have the choice of serving in one of three areas: the military, social service, or a conservation corps. For those participants without a high school diploma, high school equivalency classes, concomitant with their chosen line of service, would be mandatory till either the earning of the certificate or the termination of their service year. Upon completion of their year of service, participants would receive a tax-exempt voucher worth perhaps seven or eight thousand dollars—the equivalent to a year's worth of work at minimum wage but certainly not more than the annual salary of a first-year soldier in the regular army. Participants living at home or in their own housing for the duration of the program (*i.e.*, those serving in social services, and perhaps also those serving in a conservation corps) would also receive a monthly stipend for living expenses. As proposed in other programs, the voucher could be used for college tuition, career training, or a down payment on a house.

The benefits of such a program would be many. The vouchers would appeal to both the college and non-college bound youth. The mandatory military training and optional military track would introduce many youngsters to the world of the military who would probably never have entertained the thought of a career in this field had it not been for a compulsory program of national service, which could only be advantageous to an army having trouble attracting new blood; and the amount of the service vouchers would not exceed the amount of a professional soldier's pay, thus not competing with or harming regular army recruitment. Local communities would have sole control over determining where and how these citizen-soldiers would be utilized; there would be no federally designated jobs, no affirmative action quotas in determining the type of jobs to be filled. The relatively short period of time in which the participants would be performing their jobs, nine months, would be ideally suited for social service positions in which burnout plays a major role, such as in nursing homes, hospital wards, and institutions for the mentally ill. Youth serving in these demanding positions would be those who have freely elected them because they either feel sympathetic to these segments of our community or are simply interested in exploring the career possibilities in these fields. Contrary to the concerns expressed by Martin Anderson, no participant in a program of national service need be forced to work in insane asylums, to monitor homeless shelters, or to serve as bathroom attendants in prisons for AIDS-infected child molesters.

The social service track as well as the conservation corps would, I hope, concentrate on rebuilding and repairing our decrepit infrastructure—our roads, bridges, railways, and public buildings. Surprisingly, not one member of the Hoover panel even considered the idea of emphasizing national service in this area. As others have suggested, to prevent possible job displacement, union leaders could sit on the state and local boards that would be determining the type of community services needed, so that cooperation not competition results from the influx of additional labor, much like FDR's appointing of a labor leader to head the CCC in the 1930's. The mandatory high-school equivalency courses required of all high-school dropouts would also appeal to that growing segment of our country calling for a national war on illiteracy.

Such a program of national service, which simulates a type of *Krümpersystem* and reflects the spirit of a *Landwehr*, which understands that citizenship is grounded on strong community ties, and that community ties are strongest when common cultural origins are preserved; which mandates equal participation in the system from all socioeconomic ranks and leaves the door open to anyone who may wish to participate; which allows for great freedom of choice within the program; which provides youngsters with discipline and training in various skills; which gives them a way off our crime- and drug-infested streets; which gives them, perhaps for the very first time, some direction to their lives, some faith in their future; which teaches experientially rather than pedagogically that membership in a community entails duties as well as rights, responsibilities as well as entitlements; which does all this at the state and local level under state and local control, free from federal manipulation and indoctrination—such a program of national service would indeed be worthy of support.

Such a plan, however, would require the acceptance of a number of unpalatable social and political truths about our unpalatable times. And Washington, as we all know, shows no sign of foregoing the palatable for the true.

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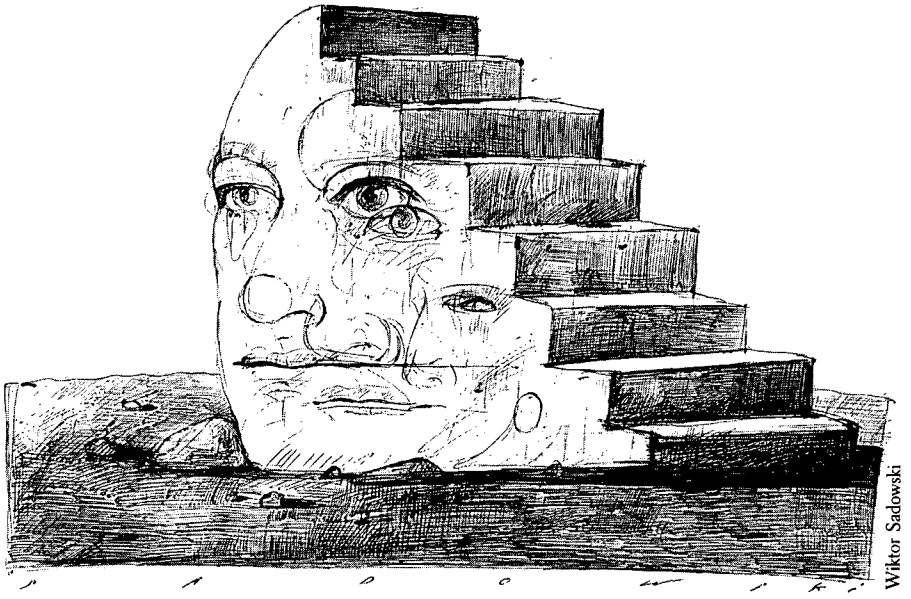
The Secret of the Twentieth Century

by Samuel Francis

"In politics, what begins in fear usually ends in folly."
—S.T. Coleridge


Wiktor Sadowski

The Politics of Rich and Poor: Wealth and the American Electorate in the Reagan Aftermath
by Kevin Phillips
New York: Random House;
262 pp., $19.95

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When Kevin Phillips's *The Politics of Rich and Poor* hit the best-seller list last summer, the Gipperites began to squeal like a worn-out fan belt in a used Toyota. "Anti-Reagan sophistry," sneered David Brock of the Heritage Foundation in the *Wall Street Journal*. "A book-length tantrum," wept Warren Brookes in the *Washington Times*. "Garbage," pronounced Republican wheeler-dealer Eddie Mahe. "I refuse to read that fraud's book," declared GOP consultant John Buckley in what must have been one of the more honest comments on Mr. Phillips's most recent contribution to scholarship.

Such, of course, is the predictable reception of a book proposing ideas and advancing arguments that cannot be comfortably hammered into existing ideological and partisan holes, and such especially is it the kind of reception to be expected from the lowing herd of pseudo-conservatives who in the past decade have succeeded in hornswoggling themselves into the courtyards (but not the corridors) of national power. When Mr. Phillips in his youth was designing the "populist" theories and strategies by which conservative Republicans could gain the votes of rank-and-file Democrats and challenge the political hegemony of a liberal elite, these same courtiers pranced for joy. Then they were happy to hear of his cyclical theory of American politics, how at approximately thirty-year intervals, one political elite is displaced by another when the incumbents have become a stale establishment. Then they were pleased to clamber into the cockpit that his theory seemed to assign them as the pilots of the "emerging Republican majority" that would hijack the country away from the New Deal coalition.

But it might have occurred to them, as it evidently did not, that if Mr. Phillips had a shred of intellectual integrity, which he evidently has, then sooner or later the cycle he claimed to have discovered would swing about, and some other rough beast would slouch toward a political Bethlehem to be born. It is Mr. Phillips's thesis in his present book that that hour has come round at last, and here he is to pluck his lyre in honor of the animal's arrival.

In other words, Mr. Phillips's belief that the Reagan era saw the entrenchment of a new political establishment that is about to be challenged by a wave of populist revolt is merely the logical extension of his interpretation of American politics that he first advanced (and which most conservatives embraced) in 1969 and that he has adapted and amended in a series of later books ever since. Remaining faithful to and consistent with his own theory does not make him, as conservative chuckleheads claim, a "liberal"; then again, it doesn't make him right either.

What really makes the Gipperites gasp, however, is not just Mr. Phillips's prediction that Reaganism is scheduled to fail politically but also that Good Old Dutch and his "revolution" were in large part fraudulent—that, so far from helping the middle income strata of the electorate who enabled Reagan

Samuel Francis is deputy editorial page editor of the Washington Times.

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to win and hold the White House, the economic, fiscal, and regulatory policies of the 1980's gave these very groups a fat lip, while allowing the corporate rich, a cadre of felonious financial wizards, and a select band of well-fed "conservative populists" to become opulent. Mr. Phillips buttresses this argument with the same kind of statistical megatonnage that has made his other books so formidable, and he has framed it in a breezy style rich with anecdotes that lend life to his numbers.

Here the reader nostalgic for the 80's may trip down memory's lane to such triumphs of "populism" as Malcolm Forbes's birthday party in 1989, complete with Moroccan horsemen. Here he may revisit such glowing symbols of Mr. Reagan's Augustan age as the teeth of Ivan Boesky, the modest couture of Nancy, and the cultural renaissance spawned by the baby boomers. Here too the reader may glimpse through the glory of the Reaganite dawn such misty vestiges of the old America as family farms now repossessed by banks and sold to corporations in New York and Japan, mines and factories now closed, and endless tracts of American land and buildings once actually owned by Americans themselves.

But to be quite fair, Mr. Phillips rather exaggerates the economic damage to the American middle class in the Reagan era. He acknowledges that the real losers in those years were largely confined to certain categories — "manufacturing employees, farmers, people in the oil industry, young householders and the working poor" — while others held steady or made small gains. The latter, however, were able to do so largely because their wives left home and went to work and because they simply worked harder to keep afloat. From 1973 to 1987, Mr. Phillips points out, Americans' leisure time actually fell by 37 percent from 26.2 hours a week to 16.6 hours, while the real average weekly wage of all workers (white collar and blue collar) declined from $191.41 a week in 1972 to $171.07 in 1986 in terms of constant 1977 dollars. "Many families," he writes,

> found themselves emptying savings accounts and going into debt, often to meet the soaring price of homeownership or to put a child through college. . . . Homeownership had reached a record 65 percent of U.S. households in 1980, after climbing steadily from 1940, when 43.6 percent of households owned their own residences. After 1980, however, the homeownership rate would drop year by year, falling to 63.8 percent in 1986 and leveling off. Young people, in particular, found that home buying was next to impossible.
>
> For much of Middle America, then, the Reagan years were troubling and ambiguous as the contrast intensified between proliferating billionaires and the tens of millions of others who were gradually sinking.

Mr. Phillips frames much of this economic analysis and what he calls "plutography" — a neologism that seems destined to enter the language as easily as his earlier coinage, "Sunbelt" — in terms of his historical theory of American politics. Hence, there is much analogizing between the Reagan era and those of William McKinley and the 1920's. "Each Republican coalition," he writes, "began by emphasizing national themes and unity symbols while subordinating commercial and financial interests. Lincoln's struggle to maintain the union is famous, but lesser efforts by McKinley in 1896 and Nixon in 1968 go little noticed." But the phase of appealing to "national unity" usually doesn't last long once the GOP sets up shop in the White House. "Beyond its emphasis on the politics of national unity, dynamic capitalism, market economics and the concentration of wealth are what the Republican party is all about. When Republicans are in power long enough, that is what America gets, by the traditional Republican methods of disinflation, limited government, less regulation of business, reduced taxation and high interest rates."

Mr. Phillips may or may not be on strong ground in his analogical theory. Like most historical interpretations, it is one that can never be proved and must be tested by its ability to explain known facts. Moreover, even if it is true, it may reveal the outer mechanics of American political history, but it doesn't really grasp the world-historical drift of what is happening in the United States and the world in the last part of the 20th century.

What Mr. Phillips is really talking about, though he may not know it, is not just the ebb and flow of political parties in the White House and Congress, but rather the continuing civilizational crisis, in its economic and political phases, of what James Burnham called "the managerial revolution." The liquidation of the middle class and its bourgeois cultural order are essential parts of that revolution, which does not consist only in its material dimension of the rolling up of comparatively small owner-operated business enterprises and farming units by colossal corporate organizations and the replacement of local, legislative, and constitutionalist government by centralized, executive, bureaucratic regimes. It also consists, in its cultural dimension, in the delegitimization and eventual extirpation of bourgeois culture — first on the grounds that that culture is the product of a selfish "capitalist" oligarchy, and later, in our own times, that it is the institutional framework by which a "white, male, heterosexual, Christian" ruling class maintains cultural hegemony. The technically skilled managerial elites that hold power in corporations, unions, universities, mass media, foundations, and government cannot secure and enhance their dominance without also undermining the cultural basis of bourgeois power, which acts as a constraint on the power of the new elite.

While Mr. Phillips sees American history in terms of a never-ending conflict between "elite" and "populist" forces, it is perhaps more accurate to see it in terms of a conflict of one elite against another. The Progressive Movement and the New Deal represent the emergence of a managerial elite that holds power through its expertise in the technical and administrative skills that enable it to operate and control overgrown organizations in the state, economy, and culture and that makes use of what has come to be known as "liberalism" to justify its challenge to a bourgeois elite that seized national power in the Civil War and its aftermath. Having entrenched themselves in political, economic, and cultural power by the end of

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World War II, managerial forces were resisted only by the remnants of the bourgeois elite and by newly formed social strata that found managerial liberalism a profound source of resentment and frustration. Until the 1980's, what was known as "conservatism" generally represented this bourgeois and post-bourgeois political and cultural resistance to the managerial apparatus of power and its agenda—heavy regulation of the economy by the state in the interests of big corporations, unions, and governmental bureaucracies but at the expense of small businessmen; social reconstruction in the interests of the underclass and the managerial theoreticians who designed, planned, and implemented it, but against the interests and values of those who had to pay for it and suffer its consequences; and a globalist foreign policy that vaguely recognized a communist threat to the country but was steadfast in its refusal to deal with the menace effectively and its preference for transnational diplomacy and global social engineering to any sustained use of force.

The high point of the bourgeois conservative resistance to the now dominant managerial regime was the presidential campaign of Barry Goldwater in 1964, but under Richard Nixon and Ronald Reagan, "conservatism" began to change its colors. While Nixon tended toward the abandonment of the pure milk of bourgeois economic dogma—as Mr. Phillips points out, as early as the Checkers speech, "Nixon had no interest in unbridled capitalism"—he sought to build what he called the "New American Majority" based precisely on those social groups that resented and feared liberal-managerial dominance and found it a frustration of their own interests and aspirations. As Mr. Phillips has also suggested elsewhere, it may be no accident that it was principally the managerial bureaucracy of the executive branch in alliance with the managerial intelligentsia that largely did in Nixon through systematic leakages to the press during Watergate. But while Nixon seems to have contemplated a simple abandonment of bourgeois ideology and institutions in favor of a more centralized and authoritarian managerial regime, Reagan cooked up something more complicated.

It was Reagan's achievement to formulate an ideology and a political style that could accommodate both post-bourgeois resentments and frustrations through an appeal to "social issues," patriotism, and "traditional morality"—what Phillips calls the symbols of "national unity"—as well as managerial interests in preserving the scale and scope of the mass organizations the elite controlled—the corporations and the federal state. It was not, of course, Mr. Reagan himself who was the author of this formula, though as a former liberal Democrat he was a perfect expression of the centrist imagery that the new formula used. The formula itself was the product of what came to be called "neoconservatism," which distinguished itself from "Old Right" bourgeois conservatism by its willingness to accept the New Deal and the progressivist tradition. The goal of neoconservatives was never to reverse or move beyond the New Deal legacy but simply to make it work more efficiently than it was working in the 1960's and 1970's. That goal, though usually masked by the neoconservatives themselves, was obvious to many of the more percipient exponents of Old Right ideology, but only after Reagan had departed the political scene was the mask thrown off and "Big Government Conservatism" unveiled in all its splendors.

"Reaganism," then, was neither a continuation of the bourgeois conservatism of the Old Right nor one more installment of an eternally recurring William McKinley nor the culmination of a cycle in American politics by which one elite ousted another and became corrupted. It was rather an effort to wed or fuse those destabilizing movements, fed by resentment, fear, and frustration, which gelled in the New Right and the candidacy of George Wallace, with still-dominant managerial elements in the state, economy, and cultural apparatus. Those elements saw their institutional apparatus of power and the "consensus" that rationalized it jeopardized by an insurgency from the right as well as from the left in the 1960's and 70's and by the whole unraveling of American society that their own efforts at social reconstruction had helped cause. So far from challenging or displacing an old elite, Reaganism simply allowed the leadership of the insurgent forces to crawl into bed with the managerial establishment and sample its favors, thereby effectively decapitating the in-

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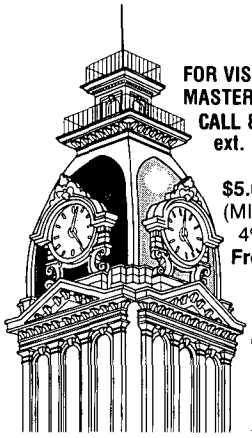

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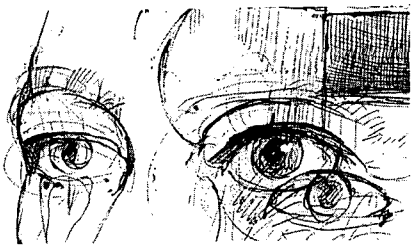
surgency.

The formula worked as long as the Teflon President was there, and it has worked for his successor since Good Old Dutch was strapped to his pony and hauled back to his ranch. But it may not work much longer if recession and the economic woes Mr. Phillips discusses pop out of the political woodwork as they seem to be doing.

What is surprising in Mr. Phillips's analysis is not his conclusion that Reaganism actually endangered middle-class aspirations but his neglect of the continuing power of the cultural and social frustrations he has so admirably penetrated elsewhere. In his 1982 book, *Post-Conservative America*, he predicted that what historian Fritz Stern called "the politics of cultural despair"—racial, national, and social hostilities and dislocations—would coalesce with economic frustrations to yield a chauvinist, authoritarian, and perhaps overtly racialist political movement on the order of what occurred in Weimar Germany. In his present book, there is virtually no reference to that thesis despite its continuing relevance.

Instead, he suggests that a new "populist" movement led by liberal Democrats in the image of Michael Dukakis, Richard Gephardt, or Jesse Jackson could successfully challenge the Reaganite Republican establishment through a "New Nationalist" program that recalls the similar slogans adopted by Theodore Roosevelt and Herbert Croly in the early 20th century. Such a program, as Mr. Phillips envisions it, would evidently be little more than a revival of the redistributionist politics and policies of the Progressivist-New Deal-Great Society eras. What he does not seem to recognize is that the kind of electoral coalition necessary for this kind of movement is today not possible.

Mr. Phillips's model presupposes that a crippled middle class could be brought into the same political tent with an underclass that, he argues, also suffered from the policies of the Reaganite corporate establishment. The fact is that in the 1990's the dominant noneconomic issue that is emerging is that of race and group identity—manifested in the rise of black demagogues such as Jackson, Louis Farrakhan, Marion Barry, Al Sharpton, and a host of lesser fry, as well as in white counterparts like David Duke and those who will soon be emulating him. The Reaganite formula did not really resolve the fissures causing what Mr. Phillips earlier called the "Balkanization of America" but only covered it up with a generous serving of political applesauce, and the emergence of overt racialism is one species of the decomposition and fragmentation that has been occurring in the United States ever since the unifying bourgeois fabric was shredded. But since purely racialist movements can appeal only to members of a given ethnic group, which by itself is a minority, no such movement, black or white, can take power in the United States merely by relying on racial rhetoric and ideology. If, however, such a movement can synthesize its appeal to group identity (racial or national) through an imagery of "us against them" with a demand for the redress of perceived economic grievances (the burden of poverty or of taxation or of the loss of a material lifestyle), then it might take wing and



fly. Such a synthesis, the combination of nationalism and socialism that has been the dominant theme of 20th-century democratic politics, not only in Weimar but also in the United States, would broaden the racial and national appeal beyond mere biology to nonracial social and political aspirations.

Mr. Phillips is surely aware of the opportunities offered by such a nationalist-socialist program and of the power of such issues as immigration, civil rights laws and litigation, and the emergence of a Sorelian myth of racial consciousness among American blacks, though he does not address these opportunities in this book. He does, however, quote liberal economist Robert Kuttner on the failure of Michael Dukakis to exploit the national-socialist synthesis effectively in 1988. Dukakis, in Kuttner's view, "had violated one of his party's basic historical verities: that 'Democrats do best when they develop broad, embracing, expansive visions combining national purpose with economic advancement, and rally masses of non-rich voters.'"

That is simply a more elegant way of stating a secret understood by successful politicians from Adolf Hitler to Franklin Roosevelt and Lyndon Johnson and also by historian John Lukacs, who writes that nationalism and socialism and their relationship are "the principal political phenomena of this century." The political masses are motivated largely by slogans, programs, and policies that revolve around the sentiments of "us against them" and "something for nothing." As long as the Democrats understood this secret, they flourished. When they forgot it and went in for Vietcong flags, paroling rapists, homosexual rights, national guilt trips, ACLU membership cards, and especially for the interests of nonwhites at the expense of their traditional white working-class constituency, they flopped. Mr. Reagan successfully exploited the Democrats' neglect of the nationalist sibling of the national-socialist Siamese twin while seeming to offer what Mr. Phillips (and the Democrats) argue is an illusory economic security that defused economic issues in politics. Those who have followed him are far less aware of the secret power of group identity and far less skilled in exploiting it, nor will emerging economic dislocations allow them to rely exclusively on national-cultural-racial themes to gain and keep power.

If there is to be a successful "new nationalism" in the next decade, its leaders will have to understand the secret of the 20th century and how to use it, whether the "nation" is that of Jesse Jackson or George Wallace. *The Politics of Rich and Poor* is a good place for them to begin to understand the economic aspects of that secret, though it is unfortunate that Mr. Phillips, whose chillingly cold-blooded analyses of politics and power have proven so fruitful in the past, has neglected any clear discussion of the secret in his present book. But he is undoubtedly right that one thing is clear: the emerging economic dislocations that the Reagan era bequeathed to the United States will bring an early death to the apparent social and political equilibrium that characterized the 1980's.

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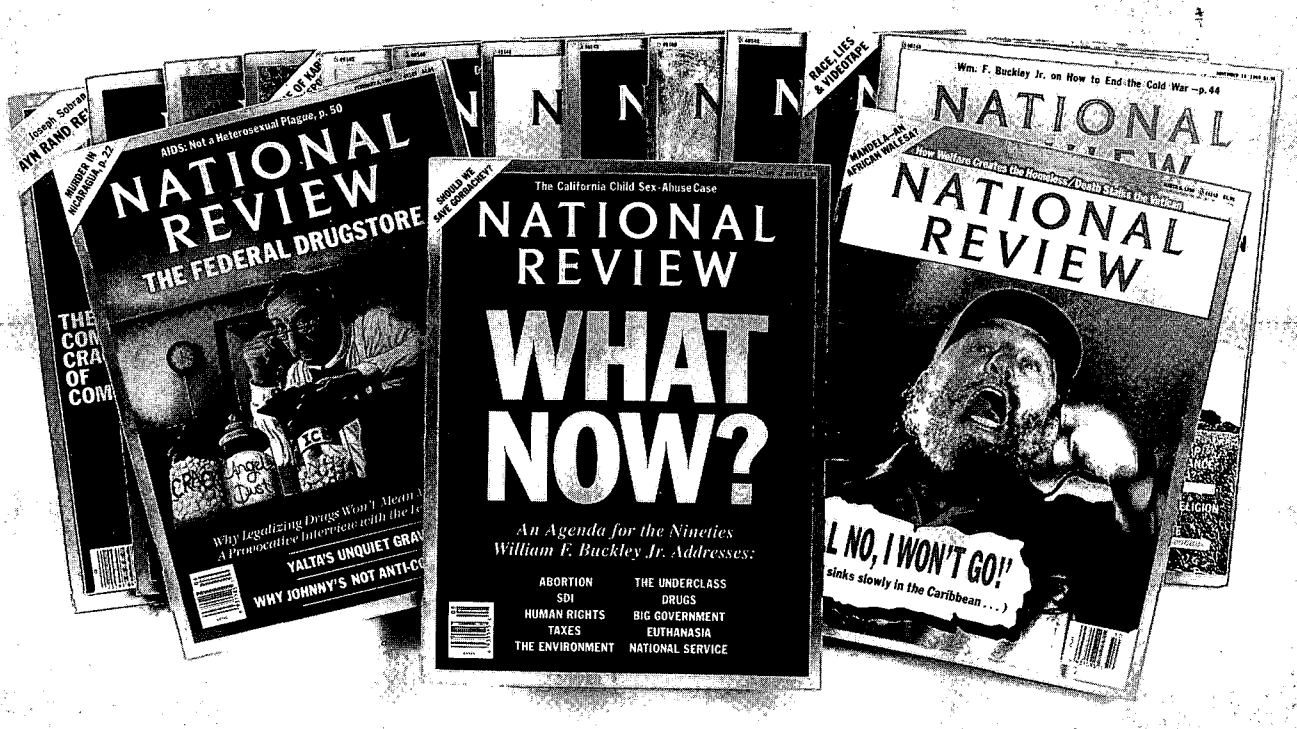

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Tuition for America

by William R. Hawkins

Selling Out: How We Are Letting Japan Buy Our Land, Our Industries, Our Financial Institutions and Our Future
by Douglas Frantz and Catherine Collins
Chicago: Contemporary Books; 400 pp., $9.95

◆

"Commerce is a perpetual and peaceable war of wit and energy among the nations" wrote the 17th-century French statesman Jean Baptiste Colbert. He likened his *Grandes Compagnies*, state chartered trading companies, to "armies" attacking the economic foundations of rival nations. Colbert's primary target was the Dutch, whose economic leadership was also being undermined by the British who went on to become the next global economic superpower. There was great concern in London that the country avoid the "Dutch disease" that had led to Holland's decline. The malady was described by Lord Sheffield in 1784 as a malady that would leave the British "rich perhaps, as individuals; but weak, as a state."

The noted expert on Dutch history, C.R. Boxer, has written that "The decentralized structure of the government and the inter-provincial jealousies of the self-styled United Provinces . . . became greater obstacles in the changed circumstances of the eighteenth century when foreign competition was more effective." It was the failure of the Dutch to counteract the trade and industrial policies of rivals that led to their defeat in international economic competition. Indeed, it is difficult now to think of Holland as once a Great Power with worldwide imperial holdings.

England eventually fell prey to its own strain of the Dutch disease under the impact of classical liberalism, a pro-capitalist creed under which British capitalism stagnated. The liberals rejected the mercantilist duality of wealth and power, preaching a pure economics isolated from politics, a world of individuals and benign competition rather than a world of nations where the balance of power was a zero-sum game. That same liberal view today clouds Washington, preventing its leaders from understanding the perpetual war for control of the world's wealth. Which brings us to Douglas Frantz and Catherine Collins, who chronicle the march of Japan's *Grandes Compagnies* through the American landscape.

The semiconductor industry followed the Colbert model:

> . . . a few diversified, integrated electronics companies, such as Nippon Electric Corporation (NEC) and Hitachi, were allowed to produce chips under protection from the government. U.S. technology and production equipment were imported and copied, but direct investment was prohibited and importation of actual chips was severely restricted.

When the world demand for chips soared, the giant Japanese firms were better able to expand with it than were the gaggle of small, underfinanced American firms that supplied two-thirds of the U.S. market. However, Japanese acquisitions like Rockefeller Center (NYC), the AT&T Building (LA), and the Xerox Center (Chicago) symbolize the larger shift in economic power. What has made such purchases possible is the combination of large American trade deficits and a declining dollar. Devaluation is the natural result of deficits, but the Reagan administration called this result a policy. According to Econ 101 "free market" thinking, devaluation will eventually eliminate the deficit as foreign goods become relatively more expensive. Yet despite a 70 percent drop in the dollar's value since 1984, the deficit remains well above $100 billion, and American automakers actually lost another 5 percent of the market during this period. Thus it has been the other side of the equation that has proved crucial. American property has become relatively less expensive: though the dollar-flows by definition balance, their composition creates a shift in wealth. Foreigners sell consumer goods, then plow back the money to buy productive assets. And the trade deficit actually understates the penetration of the market, since foreign-owned plants built in the United States expand their market share without its showing up in the trade statistics.

Financial power supports the process. Europe, led by London, was long the world's banker. However, the strain of World War I shifted the center of finance to the United States, where it remained until the 1980's. In 1980 the world's largest bank was Bank of America. By 1987, Bank of America ranked forty-fifth and had to seek Japanese capital to stay afloat. Of the world's 25 largest banks today, 17 are Japanese (including all of the top ten). None is American.

The Japanese have become the dominant player in the U.S. bond market. When the trade figures for August 1987 showed continuing large deficits, the fear was that the dollar would drop again. Japanese investors started selling bonds, driving interest rates up in September and triggering the stock market crash of October. Richard Koo, a senior economist with Nomura Securities, told *Forbes* that the September rate hike was "tuition for America. Now you have learned how dependent you are on foreign capital."

The Japanese also invest in political power, and the four chapters Frantz and Collins devote to Tokyo's machinations in Washington are the most disturbing pages of their book. Robert Angel, former head of the Japan Economic Institute, a D.C. "research center" financed by the Japanese government, is quoted as saying that Japan "can buy its way out of any trouble." In 1988 Japanese interests spent an estimated $100 million to influence foreign policies. Over one hundred Japanese subsidiaries have PACs. It is unknown how many lobbyists Japan has, since those working for foreign-owned companies operating in the United States do not have to register as foreign agents.

What *is* known is their aim to induce Congress and the White House

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to act in behalf of Japanese, rather than of American, interests. Whatever one's views on the purely economic issues, the dangers of allowing people whose loyalties lie overseas to control American policy are obvious. Money goes not just to politicians but to those who influence their thinking: "there is a huge pool of academics and think-tank occupants in Washington whose bills are paid in full or in part by the Japanese and who always have a friendly opinion ready to offer." The very influential Institute for International Economics is now heavily financed by Japanese funds. Its head, Fred Bergsten, often referred in the 1970's to Japanese "mercantilism." He doesn't do that anymore.

The philosophy of individualism means that many government officials have no trouble rationalizing working for foreign interests. Thus Eric Garfinkel, a deputy assistant director of commerce and trade entrusted with devising policy to protect the American machine tool industry, left the Reagan administration to go to work for a law firm representing the Japanese machine tool industry. Robert Watkins, of the Commerce Department, was sending resumés to Japanese auto manufacturers at the same time as he was involved in negotiations over auto parts import policy. It follows that if nations do not matter in trade, then neither does national loyalty. And it is the corrosive effect of this kind of thinking that is the most dangerous development of all.

William R. Hawkins writes from Knoxville, Tennessee.

Not Communism But Feminism

by Nicholas Davidson

The Feminist Takeover: Patriarchy to Matriarchy in Two Decades
by Betty Steele
Gaithersburg, Maryland: Human Life International; 192 pp., $9.00

◆

News of strange doings up north has begun to travel south of the border. Last year, a University of Toronto mathematics professor was convicted of "sexual harassment" for allegedly staring at a part-time female student in the university pool. In *Weak Link*, Brian Mitchell reports that the Canadian military is now 9.2 percent female, barely behind the U.S. military at 10.3 percent.

According to Betty Steele, housewife, journalist, and author of *The Feminist Takeover*, Canadian feminists have now progressed *beyond* the American feminists who originally inspired them and are in the process of instituting a full-fledged "matriarchy." At a time when some conservatives are complacently basking in the demise of communism in Eastern Europe, Mrs. Steele warns that we are rapidly destroying freedom at home. Although Mrs. Steele's main focus is on her native Canada, most of her argument is equally applicable to the United States.

Up to the publication of Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* in 1963, says Mrs. Steele, "the largest proportion of middle-class women on this continent were living in peace in what they believed to be a normal, traditional, worthwhile lifestyle." Betty Friedan's book took the lead in convincing women that housewives were worthless—"house slugs," in a phrase that became popular in the Canadian media. Taught that their traditional lifestyles were symptoms of "male oppression," uncounted numbers of women proceeded to destroy their relationships with men, avoiding marriage if single or divorcing their husbands if married. Instead of traditional feminine pursuits, they threw themselves into Betty Friedan's "new life plan for women," a cloning—and, very often, a caricature—of the male careerist lifestyle.

Taught that they were "oppressors" responsible for the ills of society and the crimes of history, men simply crumpled. In this climate of contempt for femininity and hostility to men, the eradication of sex roles rapidly emerged as a primary goal of public policy. No longer would "house slugs" dominate the women's magazines. No longer would physically demanding occupations be staffed primarily by men.

Unlike the United States, Canada actually passed an equal rights amendment. As a result, the Canadian constitution now prohibits discrimination based on race, ethnic origin, religion, sex, age, and mental or physical handicap. An additional clause specifies that, despite this prohibition, discrimination is allowed in favor of the "disadvantaged." Female careerism and childhood daycare are thus effectively constitutionalized.

There is now a Canadian cabinet ministry on the Status of Women. A separate, thirty-member "National Advisory Council on the Status of Women" has an annual budget of $2.4 million. Every Canadian province has been furnished with a "Women's Directorate," a government agency devoted to implementing the feminist agenda. The Ontario Women's Directorate, for example, has a staff of 51 and an annual budget of $8 million.

Canadian feminist organizations have achieved outstanding success in securing government funding. Mrs. Steele's information in this area is especially impressive: "The National Action Committee on the Status of Women, the country's largest feminist lobby group, receives $300,000 from the Secretary of State; the Congress of Learning Opportunities for Women, $189,000; the Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women, $295,000; the National Association of Women and Law, $100,000," and so on.

Although Mrs. Steele maintains that feminism now enjoys even greater influence in Canada than in the U.S., it can fairly be doubted whether there is much substantive difference. To take just a few examples: under both Reagan and Bush, the Justice Department has initiated numerous "sex discrimination" cases that go far beyond anything required by existing statutes—most recently against the Virginia Military Institute. The U.S. Department of Defense has been placed under the oversight of DACOWITS, a committee of feminist activists. In 1980-1981, the National Organization for Women received $595,961 from the Department of Education alone, and over forty state governments now include Women's Divisions.

In Canada as in the United States, affirmative action and comparable worth legislation is now widespread. Corporations are required to endorse and enforce "equal opportunity." Business is thus forcibly enlisted in the

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struggle to destroy traditional society. Increasingly, traditionalist views are simply illegal. Woe to the corporate executive who dares to utter a commonsensical preference for men as managers! In Canada, special government funds have been established to subsidize women bringing affirmative action and comparable worth suits. In Mrs. Steele's words, "Millions of dollars have actually been pouring into support mechanisms across the country, from federal and provincial governments, to enable women to win all their complaints cases, whereas there has never been a penny offered by governments for defense in these cases."

New divorce laws underline the extent of the changes that have taken place. In Canada, ex-wives receive sole child custody in 85.6 percent of cases, regardless of whether fault was present and which spouse initiated the divorce. Mrs. Steele reports that "*Statistics also show that women outnumber men two to one in seeking divorce*" (emphasis in original). Like their American counterparts, Canadian feminists have engineered major increases in child support. As in the U.S., these increases are backed up by computerized enforcement and the imprisonment of fathers who fail to pay. Shorn of all authority over his children and forced to work for a wife who has discarded him, the typical divorced man today is less than an indentured servant (who at least signed his contract of servitude voluntarily). Unsurprisingly, no one profits from this system of family destruction. The ex-wife typically finds herself faced with the crushing burdens of single motherhood, the dearth of eligible men, and the lasting desolation of the children of divorce.

As traditional sex roles fade into historical memory, the results of the feminist revolution are coming into focus. In 1973, it was projected that 95 percent of Canadians would marry at least once in their lives. By 1983, this figure had fallen to 65 percent. Since 1968, the divorce rate in Canada has risen 500 percent. Between adult loneliness and the impact of divorce on children, the suicide rate has skyrocketed. From 1965 to 1982, the suicide rate among Canadian teenagers increased by 327 percent. The Canadian fertility rate has plummeted and is now one of the world's lowest, at 1.4 children per family. (Replacement level is around 2.3 children per family.) Unless buttressed by immigration, government population experts predict that the Canadian population will fall from 25 million today to 15 million in 2050.

The picture Betty Steele paints is not a pretty one, but we should not flinch from it, for it is accurate. As the Francis Fukuyamas bask in the worldwide triumph of liberal democracy, Mrs. Steele comes to remind us that our current arrangements have all the stability of the later Roman Empire.

Nicholas Davidson is the author of The Failure of Feminism *(Prometheus Books) and the editor of* Gender Sanity: The Case Against Feminism, *an anthology (University Press of America).*

The Unmelancholy Dane and the Exemplary American

by J.O. Tate

Tristanissimo: The Authorized Biography of Heroic Tenor Lauritz Melchior
by Shirlee Emmons
New York: Schirmer Books;
480 pp., $24.95

Lawrence Tibbett: Singing Actor
Edited by Andrew Farkas
Portland, Oregon: Amadeus Press;
160 pp., $29.95

◆

The number of Wagner revivals has been increasing since the late 1950's and the John Culshaw/Georg Solti *Ring*. The Wagnerian presence is so extended that the Metropolitan Opera's production of the *Ring* was broadcast last summer on four successive nights on public television. The result was quite good, though it's a bit unnerving to find a mini-Bayreuth at home. Perhaps the presence of the *Ring* cycle as an option on the cable is even more remarkable than the performances themselves, in this age of Madonna and 2 Live Crew.

But still, there's something missing. The Brünhilde is shrewd and brave, but also "overparted." She just hasn't got the chops. The Siegfried too has his merits, all but one—he doesn't sound like a hero. In these cases and others, memory supplies what it provokes: the thought of complete mastery of the singing requirements. Some remember yet the live performances that others know from recordings. There is an immortality that attaches to certain names: Frida Leider, Friedrich Schorr, Kirsten Flagstad, perhaps Helen Traubel and Birgit Nilsson. And one other, of course. The shadow of Lauritz Melchior looms; the echo resounds.

> What then—forty years after Melchior's retirement from opera and seventeen years after his death—does the operatic world still await? A Heldentenor voice of steely power and clarion ring that can cut through the Wagnerian orchestra handily; a voice so strong that it never needs to operate at its limit, giving the sense of power in reserve; a voice, therefore, with the endurance to triumph at the end of the role; a voice, furthermore, not only so gifted as to strength and quality, but also so well-schooled in the idiomatic use of the German language that it reveals the poetry of the score, and so technically skilled that it can master the art of dynamic shading rather than capitulating to the adoption of a uniform fortissimo bellow. This is to say, a voice that is equal to Richard Wagner's own ideal.

Shirlee Emmons puts Lauritz Melchior in that perspective, and rightly so.

She puts him in other perspectives as well. She shows us Melchior as a "Copenhagen lad," one devoted for life to wining and dining, a curiously passive man whose rather strange family life she treats with understanding and a firm fairness. Shirlee Emmons shows us a singer who was at Bayreuth in 1924 where and when he learned his craft in an ambiance that included Cosima and Siegfried Wagner, and Adolf Hitler. And in a historical counterpoint, she

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takes us through years that are studded with the names of Leo Blech, Bruno Walter, Wilhelm Furtwängler, and many others, until the disintegration of Europe and the Nazification of Germany drove Melchior to America for good. The ascendancy of Hitler and his relationship to Wagner, to Bayreuth, and to musical politics, Emmons plays for all its worth. The personal stories of Frida Leider, Kirsten Flagstad, and others are woven into the narrative of Melchior's career, lending shade to this account of a life that was, on the whole, sunny.

A pleasure-loving man, Melchior was not cut out for tragedy. Wasn't he somehow "at home" appearing in *Thrill of a Romance* and *Luxury Liner* and other such cornball movies? The giant, the hero, had a deep need to be the clown, the buffoon. Rudolf Bing made a point of humiliating Melchior and eliminating him from the Metropolitan Opera in 1950. He was wrong, but he had a reason:

> Headlines screamed "COURT RULES IT ISN'T NOISE IF MELCHIOR SAYS ITS MUSIC!" and Lauritz looked just fine playing the washboard for the photographers from his *Herald-Tribune*. In the same month as the glamorous Metropolitan opening, Lauritz served as witness for the defense in the trial of the Korn Kobblers' Band. Accompanied by a few beauteous show girls, the Korn Kobblers were riding along Broadway in a hay wagon, celebrating their impending appearance at a restaurant in the vicinity. At 47th Street and Broadway they were handed a noise summons by a policeman who insisted that auto horns, washboards, and inverted spittoons were not orchestral instruments. Lauritz, brought along to court by the chief Korn Kobbler to help prove that it was music that they were making, spoke eloquently: "Sometimes it is difficult to determine what is music. Wagner's operas were at first described as unnecessary noise. The music of living composers is way ahead of the people." From the sublime to the ridiculous seemed to be the normal path of Lauritz's life. Could Rudolf Bing have missed this coverage? Most surely he heard Melchior's exuberant rendition of the Chevrolet radio commercial. The Wagnerian parody of "Seeeeeeee the U!S!A! in a Che-vro-laaaaaaaay" was inescapable.

Well, so was Lauritz Melchior's destiny. Shirlee Emmons was herself a member of "The Lauritz Melchior Show" that toured nightclubs, which gave her a personal insight into Melchior's personality and the retrogression of his career.

But most of the authority of her biography of Melchior is scholarly. Extensively researched and documented, *Tristanissimo* is a superbly composed, impeccably balanced rendering of a life. Just at those most difficult points — the Nazi degradation of German culture and the Wagner cult, Melchior's failures as a father and his weaknesses of character — she is strongest. Her scrupulous maintenance of comprehensive understanding gives a sense of forgiveness to the portrayal of old grudges and family bitterness. At the end, we see that the *Heldentenor* was no hero, but we must be sad to see him go. After all, there haven't been many singers around who could "do" Siegmund at 70 as well as ever, or whose idea of "warming up" was to get on the outside of a bottle of Carlsberg. You have to like a guy like that. But you have to feel something more for the artist who recorded Act I of *Die Walküre* with Lotte Lehman and Bruno Walter so unforgettably, and who left behind a cut but incandescent *Tristan* love duet with Frida Leider that puts all others in the shade.

Shirlee Emmons has succeeded handsomely in doing justice not only to her peerless subject, but to the familial, cultural, and historical contexts of his life. Complete with elaborate notes, bibliography, discography, and photographs, her *Tristanissimo* is the best biography I have read in years.

Another book on a great singer, Andrew Farkas's anthology of pieces about Lawrence Tibbett, is nowhere near as extended a study as Emmons' biography of Melchior. But it is a valuable, useful work, one that not only says much about an imposing artist but also provokes some reflections about music in America today.

John Charles Thomas, Robert Merrill, Cornell MacNeill, and Sherill Milnes notwithstanding, Lawrence Tibbett was the greatest of American baritones, one whose American training led to international impact, *matinée* idol status, and recordings cherished by lovers of great singing all over the world. A superb artist and a reflective and intelligent person, Tibbett was the man for whom the Metropolitan Opera mounted English-language operas that are chiefly remembered today because he sang in them: *Emperor Jones*, *The King's Henchman*, and *Merry Mount*. Farkas's *Lawrence Tibbett* includes the singer's own argument for opera in English as the key to popular acceptance. I think today that argument must seem quaint, since opera in its original languages thrives popularly, in many ways; and since too the degradation of popular music has opened up an all but unbridgeable gap between "high" and "low." Tibbett and others had the good fortune to live in a generation that enjoyed some measure of cultural unity. Cab drivers sang the Prologue to *I Pagliacci* — and Tibbett sang "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" with matchless power on the radio. Stars of Tibbett's charisma don't come along very often, but when they do, they redefine "the rules" and create their own audience, as Callas did.

The story of Tibbett's life and career is surveyed in Thomas R. Bullard's "Lawrence Tibbett," the most substantial essay in Farkas's book. Also included are various other pieces, including ones by Tibbett himself, a lavish supply of photographs, and a complete discography by W.R. Moran. Every vocal buff will want a copy of *Lawrence Tibbett*, which leaves me feeling only one lack: the sound of Tibbett's voice in my ear.

That lack can be supplied today on RCA and Pearl silver discs, which gloriously demonstrate why Tibbett still lives in recordings sixty years old. That great Iago, Simon Boccanegra, and Ford continue to cast vocal spells. Anyone who has never heard Tibbett's rendition of Loewe's "Edward" should do so posthaste. The likely result will

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be acquisition of the tribute to Tibbett assembled by Andrew Farkas.

J.O. Tate is professor of English at Dowling College on Long Island.

On the Road to Somewhere

by Chilton Williamson, Jr.

The Return of Richard Nixon and Other Essays
by Gregory McNamee
Tucson and New York: Harbinger House; 213 pp., $9.95

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This book is mistitled, in the sense that Richard Nixon is the least interesting of the multivarious subjects covered herein. The author, of course, is not to blame for that fact; and perhaps it was modesty that kept him from perceiving where the strengths of his collection really lie.

These essays differ in depth and in quality as well as in their subject matter, but the best of them—"When We With Sappho," "The Betrayal of Ernest Hemingway" (published last year in *Chronicles*), "The Imaginary Atlas," and "To the Manner Born"—show McNamee to be a natural handler of the essay form. He has the born essayist's requisite breadth of learning, his facility for the long and deceptively easy-seeming reach, and—where the subject under discussion is neither RMN nor Ronald Reagan—his relaxed tone conveyed by a distinctive personal voice. Though as a writer Gregory McNamee is politically speaking very much *engagé*, he is at his best artistically when dealing with literary topics. Of the many performances included in this collection, "When We With Sappho" (about the poet, essayist, painter, critic, and classicist Kenneth Rexroth) is the most learned; "Buried Under the Volcano" (concerning the novelist Malcom Lowry) and "The Betrayal of Ernest Hemingway" (on the subject of Hemingway's heirs and assigns, who took it upon themselves to publish posthumously the author's unfinished third-rate manuscripts) are the most sensitive and compassionate; while "The Imaginary Atlas" is a textbook example of the essayistic art of digression, progression, modulation, and final resolution. It is also perhaps the work in which the author most completely realizes his natural voice—its pitch, its tone, its mood:

> Southern Utah is scorchingly hot in the summertime; good weather for rattlesnakes, poor weather for traveling in an automobile without air conditioning . . . I stopped in Mount Carmel, a lovely green town, for a cold beer with which to combat the elements. I found one, too, for even alcohol-shy Mount Carmel lies within the *oikoumene*, the habitable world of the Homeric poems, distinguished by the things of civilization. Much as some might suspect the contrary, the state of Utah—or most of it, at any rate—is not Philoktetes's cave.

From this introductory paragraph—so varied in mood, diction, and frame of reference—"The Imaginary Atlas" proceeds to its pantheistic conclusion via such intermediary subjects as Utah beer signs, King Roger of Sicily's map of Idrisi, humanly conceived borders and "the manifold divisions of the world in space and time," Joseph Conrad and "places of darkness," fabulous geography in Western history, fractal geometry, and Gaian ecology. About midpassage, the following sentence appears: "We would want to know the ancient names of all places, for the past is a land we may inhabit whenever we wish."

That sentence is significant, for its burden is central to McNamee's understanding of the nature both of time and of human culture. "A current notion in contemporary physics, the epic poetry of our day," McNamee writes in "When We With Sappho," "is that time is granular, meaning that somehow time has a physical nature and can therefore be as easily bent and molded as a beam of light or an electro-magnetic pulse. . . . The so-called primitive languages have recognized it for millennia, but the Euroamerican mind is just beginning to accept as commonplace that time is not neatly ordered, that it is nonlinear, that it is relative to the viewpoint of the observer." The notion that the past exists in both present and future was a central tenet of 20th-century Modernism, and the point of this is not lost on McNamee, who grasps as firmly as did T.S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, William Faulkner, and Kenneth Rexroth the fact that "a civilization must have continuity and memory if it is to endure, that modernity should not be obliteration but extension."

Though in strictly political terms McNamee may be a Man of the Left, culturally speaking he belongs in that category of anomalous men who—like his friend and sometime collaborator, the late Edward Abbey—resist the traditional outworn taxonomy of Left and Right. In fact, in the present volume, the essay "Scarlet 'A' on a Field of Black"—whose subject is Abbey's politics and art, which Abbey considered, as McNamee does, to be one and the same thing—makes patently clear how much civilized people of the "Left" and the "Right" share both a common complaint and a common enemy in the post-Modern world. When Gregory McNamee writes of "the disastrous times which we inhabit" and refers to what he calls "the present barbarism," men and women for whom that disaster and that barbarism are not—as they are for McNamee—almost totally signified by "The Age of Reagan" nevertheless know exactly what the author is talking about.

Chilton Williamson, Jr. is senior editor for books at Chronicles.

Death in Disguise

by F.W. Brownlow

D.H. Lawrence: A Biography
by Jeffrey Meyers
New York: Alfred A. Knopf; 445 pp., $24.95

◆

The 1950's were the high point of D.H. Lawrence's critical reputation. In those days university English professors were keen teachers of Lawrence's message of "life" and emotional honesty, and he was a popular subject for undergraduate theses. He now appears less frequently on reading lists, and the other day I heard a high-school teacher say that her students

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found *Sons and Lovers* funny. Jeffrey Meyers' objective, dispassionate approach to Lawrence reflects this change of atmosphere, and two things in particular emerge from reading his well-documented, fascinating book: how influential Lawrence has been, and how dated his writing now looks.

These are not irreconcilables. Lawrence, a working-class boy from a mining village out of the mainstream of English life, was really a 19th-century figure, more preacher than artist, more like Ruskin, Kingsley, and Carlyle than his modernist contemporaries. A successful preacher, too: his message can be read on bumperstickers from coast to coast, the creed of the counterculture. Jeffrey Meyers documents its main points: the preference for nature over people, and for the primitive over the civilized; hatred of rational Europe and Christianity; a hankering for "the other," wherever one might find it; a deep belief in the regenerative powers of sex and the simultaneous orgasm; and an equally deep dislike of America and its belief in liberty and democracy.

On the other hand, though the message lives, the prose it is written in often looks quaint. It has dated like the picture Lawrence enjoyed so much, Maurice Greiffenhagen's "An Idyll," and for the same reason: too much fantasy, too little reality. Many of Meyers' quotations are prose of the kind that Evelyn Waugh's friend Mary Lygon said "makes one hum," especially when sex gets mixed up with biblical syntax. Yet even at his kitschiest, Lawrence has been influential. Some characteristic scenes, *e.g.*, sex-in-the-water (admittedly a staple of pornography long before Lawrence) and sex-on-the-beach, are now conventions of erotic fantasy.

Jeffrey Meyers' matter-of-fact approach tends to emphasize the separation of Lawrence's content from its form, and questions inevitably arise in the reader's mind. Take, for instance, the notorious suppression of *The Rainbow* on grounds of obscenity. As Meyers explains it, the sex in this novel and in *Women in Love* is not all plain sailing; there is some homosexuality and sodomy. The irony of the legal case, therefore—suspending for a moment any objection one might have in principle to censorship—is that if the publisher had defended *The Rainbow*, the authorities could have won their case—and the more famous *Chatterley* case of 1960 as well—but were either too naive or too timid to know it. This is because Lawrence, the prophet of sexual candor, disguised the riskiest scenes in the figurative, high-flown language of the decadent style, as if he were spellbound by the shame and mystery of his own imaginings: "The secret, shameful things are most terribly beautiful" or "How good it was to be really shameful!"

Meyers' treatment of this element in Lawrence throws an ironical light on the *Chatterley* trial, at which establishmentarian worthies testified to the book's moral value. It also reveals a more sinister side to the Lawrenthian gospel. When Lawrence advocates practices that would give a surgeon general nightmares, he is preaching radical or absolute freedom through sex. The character of Ursula in *Women in Love* is an example, "liberated into perfection" by what Meyers calls, using Lawrence's words, "her degrading, bestial and shameful experiences with Birkin." Pursued in real life as opposed to pornographic fantasy, this ritualized perversion is exploitative and dangerous, not to mention offensive; no one who does moral and physical violence to the deepest feelings of modesty will emerge unscathed. Yet Lawrence evidently believed these Byronic acts of defiance to be necessary; he did not describe them in a spirit of cheerful pagan permissiveness.

Jeffrey Meyers' revelation of Lawrence's antinomian streak—though he does not use the word—leads one to think that Lawrence's writing was expressive, not prophetic, and that it expressed his own immoderate, self-centered personality. No one as contradictory as Lawrence can be a real prophet. If, for instance, one is a believer in "life," as Lawrence claimed to be, then surely one must also believe in purposive evolution, and cannot possibly take an anti-intellectual or anti-rational position. The turn from reason to the primitive, the animal, and instinctual in the name of something called "life," is all too likely to be a dance of death in disguise.

Yet without following or even sympathizing with Lawrence, one can perhaps understand him. In Lawrence the representative figure and prophet one sees some consequences of bringing people up in brutally ugly surroundings, starved of intellectual and aesthetic nourishment. Lawrence came from a place where the only sources of real pleasure and beauty were sex and nature, both of them continually threatened and degraded by the machine and the machine-minded. In those circumstances the spirit is either dumb or it protests: Lawrence acquired his anger honestly.

Unfortunately, as Meyers shows us, from his unhappy mother he also learnt social and sexual ambition; worse, her contempt for life, backed up by chapel Calvinism, wounded him emotionally, and this must have been the source of his violence. An upbringing like that gives little space for spiritual or imaginative maneuvering: no wonder Lawrence was a wanderer or that he sought initiation into forbidden realms.

Flawed as a writer and as a man, dead at 44, Lawrence nevertheless imposed his savage vision. Between his ailing psyche and a society with much to be ashamed of, there proved to be an essential sympathy, so much so that one could say of him as of Christopher Wren, "If you want a monument, look about you." In his Lawrenthian 60's, even his looks were fashionable.

Lawrence lived a sad, always significant life, intensely pathetic at the end; Jeffrey Meyers has told it well.

F.W. Brownlow is professor of English at Mt. Holyoke College.

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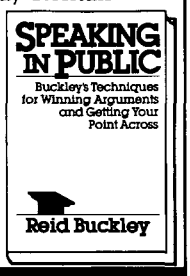

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Letter From Paris

by Curtis Cate

Two Triumphs of 'Mediacracy'

◆

Seldom in France's recent history has the difference between what is truly urgent and important and what the public is concerned with been so apparent as during the past twelvemonth. Last October, at a time when international attention was focused on the flood tide of East German refugees that was surging through the breach in the Iron Curtain opened by the Hungarians, the French were absorbed for weeks in a heated controversy as to whether Moslem schoolgirls should or should not be permitted to wear a head shawl during class. Again, in May of this year, when Europeans all over the continent were anxiously watching to see what the first more or less free elections in decades were going to produce in Czechoslovakia, Romania, and Bulgaria, French public opinion was so convulsed by the desecration of a Jewish cemetery in southern France that this outrage pushed every other kind of news into the background for days.

Far be it from me to suggest that there are never moments when it is best to "find great quarrel in a straw." It is to France's eternal honor that in the late 1890's an uncompromising politician, Georges Clemenceau, and a famous novelist, Émile Zola, dared to turn the country upside down by frontally assaulting the military establishment because of a scandalously dishonest sentence passed on a humble captain, falsely accused of having acted as a spy for a foreign power. However, it would be absurd to compare the Dreyfus affair with what happened at Creil in October 1989 or near Carpentras last May, for these were essentially molehills inflated overnight into "mediatic" mountains.

L'Affaire du foulard islamique began in early October of last year when the principal of a school in the town of Creil, some thirty miles north of Paris, brought pressure to bear on three schoolgirls, two of them of Moroccan, the third of Tunisian origin, who had decided not to remove their head shawls during class. An attempt to reach a compromise by allowing the girls to wear their foulards in the school's corridors and during recreation "breaks," but not in the classroom, broke down thanks to the intransigence of the parents, who insisted that this ban was an intolerable affront to the "cultural identity" of Islam. Before he knew quite what had happened to him, the unfortunate school principal found himself in the center of a national storm, in which inevitably the old familiar slogans of "racism," "religious intolerance," and "ethnic discrimination" were carelessly bandied about. And thus, at a time when France faces a major education crisis—with hideously overcrowded classrooms and lecture halls, a catastrophic dearth of teachers due to insufficient pay and steadily declining professional morale, and antiquated university campuses that are a national disgrace—the only thing that seemed to matter for weeks on end was whether or not schoolgirls of Moslem origin should be allowed to wear a classroom veil.

The controversy, raging through thousands of newspaper and magazine articles, brought to light a confusing diversity of opinion and revealed how troubled and unsettled, for France too, is the sociocultural problem of the "melting pot." Sheikh Haddam, the rector of Paris' largest mosque and generally regarded as the foremost Islamic authority in France, predictably declared himself "outraged" by the "discriminatory attitude" of the school principal at Creil, denying that the defiant wearing of the *hidjeb*—the correct appellation for what in Shiite Iran is known as the *tchador*—could be interpreted as a subtle form of "religious proselytism." Daniel Youssouf Leclercq, former chairman of the National Federation of Moslems in France, insisted no less roundly that the veil was an "imperative of modesty," pointing out that, far from being of exclusively Islamic inspiration, it had often been worn in traditional representations of the Virgin Mary. Alain Goldmann, the chief rabbi in Paris, expressed his own reprobation in forthright terms: "Those who refuse Moslem children the right to wear the *tchador* or Jewish children to wear the *kippa* are intolerant," adding, "Today it is no longer the religiously inclined who are displaying intolerance, as they are so often blamed for doing, but laymen. The lay school should set the example of tolerance."

Less trenchant was Cardinal Lustiger, the Catholic archbishop of Paris, who called on Moslems to "explain in precise fashion" if the wearing of the *hidjeb* was a religious prescription and why." French socialists, who pride themselves on their ethnic tolerance and the "libertarian" attitudes they like to assume on every conceivable subject, were curiously divided on the issue. Well-known for her militant espousal of Third World causes, Danielle Mitterrand, the French president's wife, defended the classroom foulard, and in so doing found herself for once at odds with her former associate and pro-Guevara *guerrillero* Regis Debray, who felt and feels that the secular and nondenominational character of French secondary schools must be preserved at all costs in the name of "republican principles." The same line was taken by Jean-Pierre Chevènement, leader of a radically left-wing faction of the Socialist Party who is today minister of defense. Those, Chevènement warned, who over the past fifteen years "have wanted to sell us 'the right to be different' extol the charms of the 'American model.' But what they are preparing for us is not the United States—assuming that that would be desirable—but quite simply Lebanon!"

Being professionally committed to raising a huge (preferably rock concert) rumpus every time the occasion presents itself, Harlem Désir, the Creole founder of the rabble-rousing pressure-group S.O.S.-Racisme, naturally added his voice to the pro-veil hue and cry. Yet others asked why concealing one's hair and ears beneath a shawl was intrinsically more dangerous and wicked than attending classes in blue jeans.

One answer, provided by an Islamic scholar named Courtellemont, was

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that the Koran does not specifically ordain the wearing of a head shawl, since the crucial 23rd Sura (Verse 59) applies to the wives and daughters of the Prophet and the "wives of the faithful"—thus excluding unmarried schoolgirls—and refers furthermore to the wearing of the full-length *haik*, covering not only the head but the entire body down to the ankles. "Why" asked Courtellemont, "do people always forget to refer to the last sentence of this verse? If not because all fundamentalists, and this in all religions, only draw from holy texts that which interests their extremism?"

The same hostility to the wearing of the *hidjeb* in French classrooms was expressed by Gisèle Halimi, an ardently "progressive" lawyer who for years boldly defended the cause of Arab "rebels" and of an independent Algeria. She announced her resignation from Harlem Désir's S.O.S.-Racisme, knowing only too well from personal experience what the wearing of the *hidjeb* means for the downtrodden mothers and daughters of Islam. As one of them, Fadela Ben Asmar, wrote in a letter published by *Le Monde*: "I was born in the Meghreb. After spending most of my life in France, I tried 'to go home' to find my family and my 'identity.' I could not endure it even for one year. Faced with the constraints of the Moslem woman's inferior status and the rise of Islamic movements, I preferred to return to France."

Of all the articles I have read on this subject, the only one deserving to be regarded as an "anthology piece" came from Alain Finkielkraut, a young French philosopher who once again displayed his flair for coming to grips with fundamental issues. In an article entitled "The Holy Alliance of the Clergies," he took issue with the Grand Rabbi and came out unequivocally in favor of the "lay" school in the name of cultural tradition. The so-called "Islamic veil affair," he argued, resembled the tumult aroused by Salman Rushdie's *Satanic Verses* in that:

> they are two aspects of one and the same attitude, which can be summed up thus: 'I support your demands in order the better to advance my own.' In demanding the authorization of the veil in classrooms, the Rabbinate preventively denounces and intimidates every attempt to forbid the *kippa* or the punishment of students who do not come to school on Saturdays. As for the Catholic Church, now engaged in an enthusiastic and grandiose project of new evangelization, it has been more and more openly asserting the monopoly of religion over spiritual life.

There was a time, Finkielkraut went on, when French schoolchildren used to turn up in simple blouses or workmanlike aprons. Today they have been done away with. Instead—"Long live the *tchador* and modernity! In the name of tolerance, of individual freedom and of democracy on the march, social inequalities and communitarian loyalties exhibit themselves violently there where it was formerly possible to suspend them, *in order to think of other things*."

The consequence of this intellectual abdication in the face of "ethnocentric" modernity has been to turn the classroom into a "juxtaposition of tribes." The old-fashioned notion of "knowledge" having been subordinated to the dictates of cultural pluralism, schoolteachers in the field of the humanities

> from now on have the mission of teaching each and every one the difference of the other. Instead of initiating students to that part of culture which transcends customs, they undertake to describe those customs. Instead of speaking of works that enlighten mankind as to its condition, they will talk of the *kippa* to those who wear the veil, and of the veil to those who wear the *kippa*; and for the combined joy of imams, rabbis, the Pope, and Danielle Mitterrand, the common world of human beings will thus be sacrificed to the highest value recognized by our waning century: respect of the Other.

The final "solution" to this problem proposed by Lionel Jospin, the French minister of education, and reluctantly adopted by Prime Minister Michel Rocard (who happens to be a Protestant), has been to kick the issue under the carpet in the hope that it will lie dormant, since only a handful of schoolgirls have so far shown themselves determined never to doff their veils in public. But it remains to be seen if this opportunistic side-stepping of the issue will work, at a time when fundamentalism is on the march in North Africa and in other areas of the Moslem world. One thing, at any rate, is certain: sixty years ago the kind of incident that occurred at Creil would have been settled in a quarter of an hour, and there would have been no further talk of the foulard. But it is true that France then controlled an empire, and television had not yet been invented.

As for the "Carpentras affair," it too was inflated by the media out of all proportion to its real significance, as an alarming indication that the French were turning into anti-Semitic racists. The very speed with which Pierre Joxe, the minister of the interior, hied himself over to Carpentras in a helicopter during the afternoon of May 10—the day on which the desecrated graves in the Jewish cemetery were discovered—was curiously reminiscent of the newspaper campaign he helped to fan against Defense Minister Charles Hernu during the tumultuous "*Greenpeace* affair" (autumn 1985). This time the primary object—to link the Carpentras profanations to some uncharitable remarks just made by Jean-Marie Le Pen about Jewish influence in the press in a direct cause-and-effect relationship—failed, for simple reasons of chronology. But Joxe's success in unleashing a tidal wave of indignation, culminating in the most massive street demonstration Paris has seen in several years, may have exceeded his fondest expectations.

And the truth in all this? Well, one answer, I think, was provided several days later when three young "skinheads" were arrested in a town near Nantes for having desecrated some tombs in a Christian graveyard. No one in his right mind could have accused them of anti-Semitism. What had motivated their despicable action was clearly the kind of mindless *Schadenfreude* youths are prone to exhibit, further stimulated by what might be called a "Stavroghin complex"—the desire to scandalize for the heady thrill of scandal—and the realization that

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their action was likely to be given national publicity by the media.

In a word, what was involved—at Nantes and Carpentras—was an act not only of profanation, but of provocation: not only against a particular community or against "respectable" society, but against the notion of the divine and all that is held to be sacred. But this question of the "sacred" and of how it can be preserved, and civilization with it, in an age of declining faith—the problem that so preoccupied André Malraux during his final years—is so momentous that I shall have to return to it in a later letter.

Historian and biographer Curtis Cate has been a resident of Paris for many years.

Letter From the Lower Right

by John Shelton Reed

Official State Business

◆

Perhaps you heard the howls (actually, more like hollers) a while back when some hapless Texas bureaucrat proposed that the Lone Star State be known henceforth on its license plates as "The Friendship State." You've got a friend in Pennsylvania, according to that state's plates, but it sounds as if Texans want to check you out first. Texas is, after all, the state where a major-party gubernatorial candidate recently observed that we need to keep our guns because "We may have to march on the government one day if it doesn't straighten out." It's where anti-litter signs say "Don't Mess With Texas." Some of us—not just Texans—believe it's bad enough that the state makes you register your car without making it a medium for tourist advertising.

Actually, though, as Dallas columnist Molly Ivins pointed out, "The Friendly State" probably wouldn't have raised any hackles. Texans *are* friendly, for the most part, and don't mind people's saying so. But many who would have found the adjective unexceptionable somehow felt that the noun was a little—well, wimpy. Last I heard the sobriquet had been shelved, but the controversy was good for some laughs while it lasted. Ms. Ivins evoked a few of them with reflections on the whole business of license plate slogans. She suggested, for example, "Oklahoma—Land of Recruitment Violations." Like me, she believes that the only plate a real man would put on his car voluntarily is New Hampshire's "Live Free or Die."

North Carolina's sure isn't one. Our plates say "First in Flight," which some of us believe is too easily construed as "First to Flee." This isn't a happy rendering at best, and it's especially unfortunate given that "Tar Heel" is said to have originated as a reference to the staying power of North Carolina's Confederate troops. Our plates used to say "First in Freedom," a reference to the so-called Mecklenberg Declaration of Independence. It doesn't behoove an employee of the state of North Carolina to comment on the historicity of that event (also commemorated on the state flag), but what we've done is to drop a reference to a doubtful but inspiring event to commemorate the undoubted but boring fact that two bicycle mechanics from Ohio made use of one of our empty beaches to test their flying machine. At least "First in Freedom" used to annoy some of the right people, one of whom put masking tape over the slogan—and wound up in court for it, which actually sort of proved his point. "First in Flight" isn't worth covering up.

Anyway, last year one of our legislators proposed an equally baffling exercise in banality, when he introduced a bill to make something called the Plotthound our Official State Dog. He was not deterred by our past experience with Official State totems, which has not been altogether happy. Our O.S. Bird, for instance, is the mockingbird, a standing—or flying—contradiction of the state motto, *Esse quam videro*, "To be and not to seem," a bird whose sweet song disguises a foul disposition and obnoxious habits.

In any case, the Plotthound bill didn't get very far, largely because no one had ever heard of this animal. When it was revealed that the creature is German, one commentator asked whether anyone knew what part of Germany it comes from, hinting darkly that we might be about to elevate a communist dog to Official State status. (This was before the Berlin Wall came down.) Once the subject was broached, champions of other dogs came forward (the blue tick hound had a number of partisans), and the debate kept our legislature from doing anything foolish for days on end.

For my part, I think we've just scratched the surface here, and I hope our legislators will put their minds to this O.S. matter. An O.S. Food, of course: pork barbecue (with tomato optional, to prevent civil war). But that's too easy; we need something to keep our legislators busy for a *long* time. How about an Official State Disgrace? I suggest the North Carolina State University basketball program.

Once you get started, it's hard to stop. Why not an Official State Roadkill? The sleeping drunk is a possibility (longtime readers of these letters may recall that North Carolina leads the nation in lying-in-the-road deaths), but if the legislature balks at that there's really only one other candidate. The skunk has a way of pressing its claim, but for sheer numbers the possum has no competition. Other states may feel that they have an equal or greater right to the possum (Texas has the armadillo, of course), but come on: we thought of it first.

And every state needs an Official State Bug. We can leave the boll weevil to Mississippi, the fire ant to Georgia; let the Land of a Thousand Lakes have the mosquito, Maine the black fly, New York the cockroach. North Carolina still has all sorts of possibilities. Some homeowners, for instance, might nominate the termite. Perhaps it would be some consolation when your floor caves in to know that the Official State Bug has been on the job. There's also a case to be made for the black widow spider: most years we lead the nation in spider-bite deaths. (I know, spiders aren't insects. That's why I said "bug.") But my own nominee would be the common tick. We have a special claim to that critter, too, since we're always #1 in Rocky Mountain spotted fever cases. And just think: if we made the tick our Official State Bug, next time we redesign our license plates we could make them say "First in Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever."

John Shelton Reed is a Tennessean who has lived in North Carolina for the last 21 years.

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LAW

Jeanne Berg

Your Papers, Please

by R. Cort Kirkwood

Nearly every film using Europe as a backdrop for international intrigue, especially those featuring Nazis in black leather trench coats, employs a scene in which the hero is crossing transnational borders on a slow-moving train. As he nervously exhales a cloud of blue smoke from an unfiltered cigarette, the authorities move from berth to berth checking identity papers. The Gestapo man flings open the door to a private car, letting in the roar of rolling train wheels grinding against the rails. He arrests the subject of his inquiry or turns back the identification papers with a silent yet suspicious or even knowing smirk, then slams the door shut, his two machine-guns toting subalterns in tow. The main problem for the men making *The Great Escape*, for instance, was forging credible identity papers to travel unmolested behind German lines until they reached the Underground. The plot of *Casablanca*? Saloon keeper Rick Blaine must procure travel documents for concentration camp escapee Victor Laszlo.

But Nazis are hardly history's last government officials to force citizens to carry some form of national identification card or work permit. Most European countries require it today, and because illegal immigration in these United States has reached crisis proportions, some people, including one influential Republican senator, want to import the idea.

Leading the charge is Senator Alan Simpson, author of the Immigration Reform and Control Act, more popularly known as Simpson-Mazzoli, the genesis for the identity card proposal. Though Simpson-Mazzoli penalizes employers with fines and jail terms if they hire illegal aliens, it's had some side effects Mr. Simpson didn't anticipate: to avoid any chance of a federal penalty, many employers simply stopped hiring Americans who were foreign-looking and sounding, mostly Hispanics and Asians. The GAO reports that such discrimination is "serious" and "widespread," which has set off alarm bells in our racially sensitive Congress.

Mr. Simpson has answered them with Senate bill 2446, which would authorize the Health and Human Services secretary to issue a new Social Security card "resistant to counterfeiting and tampering" that can "reliably determine" that the "person with the identity claimed by the bearer is eligible to be employed in the United States." The card would contain a photograph and other improvements, but would "not be required to be carried on one's person," its only purpose being to determine an individual's eligibility to work in the United States.

Senator Daniel Moynihan has introduced similar legislation that would require new Social Security cards to be made of "tamper-resistant material such as plastic or polyester" and carry the accoutrements of a credit card: "magnetic stripes, holograms and integrated circuits." These brave New World cards might also carry "biometric" tools like fingerprints and retinal scan systems. Though staff member Ed Lopez says Senator Moynihan's point was to "have a better symbol of" the Social Security program—in other words, a nifty looking card to make a financially and philosophically bankrupt program look more prosperous than it really is—the legislation says it must be "developed to provide a more reliable means of verifying eligibility for employment under" Simpson-Mazzoli. The bills are awaiting action in the Judiciary and Finance committees.

The goal is to close our open southern border by enhancing an employer's ability to determine whether he unknowingly hires illegal aliens. Employers wouldn't discriminate because they'd know they were hiring real Americanos. For their part, the illegals would stay home because they wouldn't be able to find work.

Supporting the idea, David Simcox of the Center for Immigration Studies warns, "the national problems [of illegal immigration] have reached the point of severity that we must ask for public cooperation" in using "secure" documents to prove work eligibility and perhaps even citizenship. Mr. Simcox says four million Social Security numbers were fraudulently used in 1986 and, quoting immigration scholar David North, says that "1.9 million amnestied aliens had either no Social Security number or had bought numbers from shady operators or made up their own numbers." Moreover, "nearly a fifth of the 1.8 million who applied for [Simpson-Mazzoli's] general amnesty originally entered the country not by sneaking across the border but by passing legitimate ports of entry using documents that were altered or obtained under false pretenses." Nearly six million foreigners reside illegally in the United States, a number growing by 250,000 annually, and 500,000 of them carry false identification. In short, employers need a way to prove they're hiring American citizens that will also discourage illegal immigration.

A more novel rationale for a federal work permit is that European countries have adopted such permits or national identification cards. Says Mr. Simpson, "nearly all Western nations, including Canada and Mexico, have employer-sanction laws. . . . And if you're going to classify countries that have a national identification card as a totalitarian government, how do you describe

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France and Germany? Because they do."

Whatever the gravity of illegal immigration, thinking Americans might ask some questions before they begin cooperating in a scheme that would vastly improve the federal government's ability to code and trace their daily business. Mr. Simcox admits that suddenly "asking" Americans to carry a national identification card would be politically intolerable, adding that more severe forms of internal identification control would require "back door" proposals like Mr. Simpson's. They sound benign—the card won't be used by the IRS, you won't have to carry it, etc.—yet something about recent history forebodes an expanded program by which Congress might increase its ability to collect taxes from "delinquents," to cite just one grim possibility. And if this federal work permit can't sweep back the tide of immigrants from Mexico, wouldn't Congress be encouraged to adopt stronger measures?

The problem with the idea is that the only people who will use this card aren't breaking the law. Like gun control laws, a national work permit will affect only those who obey laws to begin with. Criminals don't care about gun control statutes or about civil and religious codes forbidding murder and robbery. Why should anyone expect illegal aliens to stop flooding the country because Uncle Sam issues a new improved Social Security card? Anyone who uses it won't need it.

As for the "Europeans are doing it" argument, Mr. Simpson and his followers haven't told the whole truth. France, which uses its national identification card for everything from immigration control and collecting taxes to handing out welfare, hasn't been able to stop the illegal immigration of North Africans. And whatever Europe's success with national identification cards, or any other policy for that matter, it shouldn't necessarily serve as a paradigm for the States. Mr. Simpson might recall that our ancestors not only left Europe to escape the kind of government philosophy a national identification card represents, but also staked their lives and fortunes on a war to cast off the legalistic and petty intrusions of the British Crown. If they like the European way of doing things, Mr. Simpson and his followers should return whence their ancestors came.

When Jerry Seper of the *Washington Times* landed in Chula Vista, California, for his five part series on illegal immigration, one evening he visited an illegal entry point with a border control officer. After about four hundred Mexicans gathered at the hole in the fence, the officer told Seper they'd have to make tracks because "they'll come up here and drag the three of us across the border and kill us."

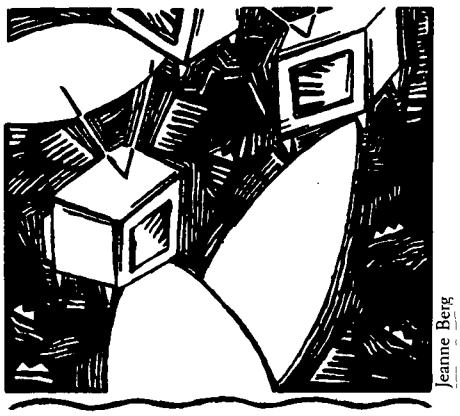
That story is emblematic of the simple truth that Congress and the President have abdicated their constitutional responsibility to protect the lives and property of American citizens and defend our national borders from a foreign invasion. As with laws respecting murder and robbery, our leaders have failed to enforce immigration laws, so to make things easy they're prepared to "ask" American citizens to bear the burden of reporting to state and federal governments. Simcox and his adherents reply that Congress won't appropriate enough money to enhance the Border Control authorities, which is true enough. But that's only because Congress is too busy spending money elsewhere.

If our elected officials want to stop illegal immigration, they can do so without forcing—or "asking," as they put it—the rest of us law-abiding citizens to carry identification papers. A few simple rules would suffice: no work permits for foreigners; no visas for Mexicans except government officials and businessmen; all travelers must present return plane tickets or travel plans at the point of entry, plus an address and phone number where they can be reached; anyone cutting through a fence or illegally crossing an open border will be shot.

If the last sounds draconian, at least it is a protective measure for the citizens of this country, which cannot be said about expanding the federal government's power to meddle in people's lives with snooping devices like identification cards and retina scanners. Or do you look forward to the day when a federal agent comes into your Amtrak sleeper to demand: "You're papers, please"?

R. Cort Kirkwood is an editorial writer for the Washington Times.

TELEVISION


Jeanne Berg

The Queen Is Dead

by Janet Scott Barlow

Perhaps you heard that Roseanne Barr recently sang the national anthem at a Padres-Reds game in San Diego. If not, then you're one of maybe three people in America who missed it, so let me fill you in. Looking like she had just rushed over from an all-day garage cleaning, Barr took the field in Jack Murphy Stadium and proceeded to sing "The Star-Spangled Banner" badly—aggressively badly, in-your-face badly. When she finished what she obviously had thought would be an endearingly awful performance—indeed, an *ironic* performance ("They knew they weren't getting an opera star," she said later)—she grabbed her "private parts," as some journalists phrased it, then spat on the ground. She was loudly booed, and two days of media frenzy followed, every minute of which I enjoyed.

One of the many interesting aspects of this episode was its context. Roseanne Barr was asked to sing the national anthem on "Working Women's Night" because the San Diego Padres management considered her an obvious and fitting representative of American working women. That made a certain kind of sense, since some very serious-minded people in this country also consider Roseanne Barr an obvious and fitting representative of working women, especially blue-collar women. What's more, such publications as the *New York Times*, the *New Republic*, and *Time* have certified this

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view of Barr, which means it was just about carved in stone—at least until she riled up thirty thousand people in Jack Murphy Stadium.

The lasting image from the whole affair—the one of America's Blue-Collar Queen singing the national anthem fingers-in-ears to block the sound of public rejection—was compelling to me, in part because I'm the product of a blue-collar home and know my share of working-class women. These women, waitresses and factory workers who go off in the morning just like their husbands, are consequential, substantial, almost imposing. They are as vocal as men, as funny as men, and as resilient as men, while remaining appropriately unlike men. Some of them are susceptible to the politics of class resentment. A few hold political and social views that would curl your hair (which is why it's a big mistake to romanticize the Common Man). But the majority have come through hard lives with a singular nugget of psychological strength: they know how to pursue happiness without demanding it, and thus, resistant to alienation, they possess the capacity for both pleasure in the present and hope in the future—all in all, no small feat, but not particularly rare. (Which is why it's a big mistake to underestimate the Common Man. Liberals, of course, don't know *what* they think about the Common Man. They pay tribute to his innate wisdom while simultaneously telling him he's the victim of manipulation, exploitation, and deception. And they wonder why they can't get a President elected.)

These are the same women described by Barbara Ehrenreich, in an adoring piece on Roseanne Barr for the *New Republic* as "the hopeless underclass of the female sex . . . the despised, the jilted, the underpaid." The trouble with that description, of course, is that most working-class women hate it. They hate it first because it's a lie, second because it's an insulting lie, and third because it's an insulting lie that is supposed to be some sort of homage. Most working-class women are proud of the work they do and the money they earn. And you don't become consequential, substantial, or imposing—you don't even become funny or resilient (though you can become vocal)—by feeling "despised." When you get right down to it, a blue-collar life doesn't even mean you have to be fat or act stupid. None of the working-class women I know would ever say, as Roseanne Barr's TV character does, "You always manage to say the most perfectly wrongest thing," because 1) they all know better and 2) if any of them did speak that way, the working-class people around them would ask, "Why are you talking like a dope?"

Having experienced the real thing, I was completely disinclined to check out Roseanne Barr's sitcom version of working-class life when it burst on the TV scene. First of all, a "realistic situation comedy" is a contradiction in terms. Second, I figured it would contain lots of references to beer and bowling. But when Barr appeared on the covers of three magazines in one week, I gave in. I watched the show twice, the first time to check out this radical new working-class icon everyone was talking about. I watched the second time because I figured I must have missed something the first time. The show is the very essence of sitcom TV: it has the properties of comedy—and thus can evoke laughs—without actually being funny. And the same is true of its star.

Beyond that, both the show and its star operate on at least one assumption that runs contrary to human nature: slobs see themselves in other slobs. (Go ahead, ask ten overweight, unkempt women this question: do you identify with the slovenliness of Roseanne Barr? You'll get eight indignant denials and two punches in the mouth.) Here's what I learned about the character of Roseanne on *Roseanne*. She is an obese woman who wears what appear to be her obese husband's work shirts—and they fit. She enjoys prole-type snack food, makes noises when she eats, and talks with her mouth full. She tells her kids to go play in the traffic. Her grammar (like her singing) is definitely atrocious. She tells off officious, heartless people who go around dumping on the Little Guy. (She seems to get dumped on a lot, which is, I take it, the TV definition of a Little Guy. No wonder liberals love this show.) She spends a lot of time being ticked off.

At the same time, Roseanne's politics and social consciousness are . . . perfect. That is, not one of her political or social views is meant to curl your hair. Her class resentments aren't a waste or a burden, they're a badge of honor and her strength. She proudly embodies a world view in which female strength and class power spring from anger, anti-elitism, and coarseness: life's a bitch, we all get shafted, and moral authority begins with a big mouth.

An angry slob, a porker with an attitude. That's the revolutionary, "realistic" new image of blue-collar womanhood so many entertainment critics and social analysts are in love with. And why is this repellent figure considered a worthy symbol of working-class women? Because she has so much pride, that's why! As for Roseanne's appearance, everyone knows that working-class women are too oppressed to look presentable; and besides, their sloppiness (as well as their obesity) is part of their reality, just as their tackiness, when they do decide to dress up, is part of their charm. Everyone also knows that working-class folks go around scarfing Cheetos and scratching themselves, so Roseanne's demeanor and habits aren't uncouth, they're authentic. (As Barbara Ehrenreich put it in the *New Republic*, "Yeah, she's crude, but so are the realities of pain and exploitation she seeks to remind us of." See how it works? To be effective, we must personify the essence of the things we hate.) And when Roseanne tells her kids to go play in the traffic, it isn't suggestive of her character's self-indulgence (or just a cheap TV laugh line), it's an understandable but maternally harmless expression of both female frustration and the anger—pervasive yet justified—of the working class. Also it's ironic.

Admirers of the Roseanne character are saying that we should expect less of her because so much more is demanded of her. If that's a patronizing view of blue-collar women, too bad and too late. *Time*, that well-known voice of the working class, has already decided *Roseanne* is "an honest portrayal of blue-collar family life."

In truth, nothing on entertainment television is "honest," and viewers understand this, even if critics don't. *Roseanne* is popular for the same reason *The Cosby Show* is popular.

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Though they depict families at different ends of the economic spectrum, both shows present a mass audience with characters and situations that are recognizable without being realistic. (When people want reality, they turn the set *off*.) Whatever *Roseanne*'s pretensions (or offenses), it was conceived by its creators and is perceived by its consumers *as television*—the entertainment equivalent of fast food—and therefore has all the "social impact" of a stop at McDonald's.

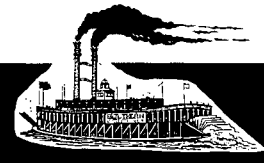
Something vital has been ignored in the many deep-thinking analyses of Roseanne Barr's sitcom character and professional persona. For feminists and other social philosophers who think large truths are revealed when a blue-collar TV character handles an insensitive boss by telling him he has "a little prize hanging out of [his] nose," it's easy to overlook the fact that Roseanne Barr is first and last a part of the big American pop-entertainment machine—which just happens to operate right in the middle of the commercial marketplace. Barr is an agent not of politics or art but of commerce, and therefore the only philosophical question with any relevance to her comedy goes something like this: if a comedienne tells a joke in the forest and there is no one around to hear it, is she funny? If that question comes up often enough, the comedienne ends up declaring herself a "survivor" and working on a comeback.

When Roseanne Barr sang "The Star-Spangled Banner" in San Diego, there was an instantaneous shift in public attitude toward her—not because she sang it badly (lots of people have messed up that song without getting booed), but because she was so pleased to sing it badly. The commentators who compared her performance to flag burning were as off base as the feminists who defended her as the victim of a double standard. There was no political message in her actions, just as there is no political significance in her television show. Her performance of the national anthem was a case of celebrity ego run amok, a vocal mooning in which thirty thousand people were made the captive objects of a private joke. And because audiences don't take kindly to being left out on the joke (not to mention that it's a bad idea to moon the national anthem), the gears began to turn ("boo!"), the big machine began to hum ("booooo!"), and Roseanne Barr took her first step toward the silent show-biz forest.

The day after she discovered that irony and the national anthem don't mix, Barr held a press conference to explain herself. The event showcased the Blue-Collar Queen as a case of arrested development. She was petulant, evasive, and defensive. In fact, she displayed the behavior of one who feels "jilted" and "despised." She demonstrated her usual command of the language by explaining that, you know, she did, like, the best she could and everything. She said more or less that the Padres fans had been mean to her, and she defiantly asserted, though the question hadn't come up, "It's my national anthem too." When told that President Bush had called her performance "disgraceful," she responded, "I'd like to see him sing it." (That Bush was ridiculed for his comment was amazing. What was the President of the United States supposed to say about such a performance—that he *liked* it?) The crotch-grabbing and the spitting? The players had suggested it. And she said she would do the whole thing again, "but I'd do it for a hipper crowd. If this is the worst thing they've ever heard, then their lives have been pretty easy." That's it! All those boos

We're not just

Whistling Dixie



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came from irony-deficient yuppie scum.

Personally, I think the remark about "a hipper crowd" was the most perfectly wrongest thing Barr could have said. But overall, I found her press conference gratifying. By making plain that she really *doesn't* know any better (if people tune in your ironic TV show and buy tickets to your ironic comedy act, why wouldn't they enjoy your ironic rendition of the national anthem?), she thereby made plain, for all who somehow have missed it, the difference between Roseanne Barr and the women she supposedly symbolizes. And there was still more to come! Later, her husband turned up on *Crossfire* and loudly labeled as "sexist" the idea that men can grab their crotches and spit but women can't. "Women can do that stuff too, pal!" he shouted in support of his wife, and I laughed so hard I woke up the cat.

When she sang the national anthem on that memorable evening in July, Roseanne Barr went one-on-one with the big American entertainment machine and she lost. She also struck her first and only blow for working-class women by freeing them from the critically imposed working-class role model of Roseanne Barr. Behind every celebrity cloud there's a silver lining. As for the heavy thinkers who helped crown her Blue-Collar Queen, they're now stuck with her, so let 'em squirm. Michael Kinsley, for instance, discovered what can happen when you write serious political commentary about a woman who excels at snot jokes: you just might end up—you want irony?—hosting her husband on *Crossfire*. And what a show that was. Upon hearing Barr's husband defend, with all the intelligence of a radish, an idea about female scratching and spitting that had all the intellectual weight of (yes!) a Cheeto, Michael Kinsley, the man often described as having "the best mind in Washington," the pundit who, only a week earlier, had written that the popularity of *Roseanne* is "a direct challenge" to the Republican Party—*that* Michael Kinsley—got a look on his face of such pain, such humiliation, such *defeat* that . . . well, the cat woke up again.

Janet Scott Barlow covers popular culture from Cincinnati.

MUSIC

Jeanne Berg

The 'Theft' of an American Classic

by Theodore Pappas

Country music has never been shirked in the pages of *Chronicles*, as any faithful reader knows. John Reed's June column concerning the Far East's fascination with country music, however, left out one pertinent mention: the story of Toru Mitsui.

Mr. Mitsui is a fifty-year-old professor of English at Kanazawa University; he is also Japan's foremost scholar on country music. In 1967 he wrote what some have called the first scholarly study of bluegrass, *Burugurasu Ongaku* (*Bluegrass Music*), and his 1971 *Kantori Ongaku no Rekishi* (*A History of Country Music*), twice reprinted, is the Japanese equivalent of Bill Monroe's standard, *Country Music, U.S.A.* He has even compiled an eleven-album set of re-recordings of "hillbilly artists" for Japanese Victor, which includes songs by Tex Ritter, the Carter Family, and the Sons of the Pioneers, as well as rare recordings by such performers as Riley Puckett, the blind virtuoso of the banjo who is credited with the first recording of yodeling. Mr. Mitsui has also traveled widely in the United States, principally for reasons of general research. His 1989 visit, however, had a specific purpose. He sought the origin and author of America's most famous folk song, the one George Jones once called the most perfect song ever written, the one widely considered to be the third best-known song (right after "Happy Birthday" and "White Christmas") in the world: "You Are My Sunshine."

Mr. Mitsui first went to the office of Georgia State University professor Wayne Daniel, who has long researched the history of American country music. Professor Daniel concluded in a 1984 article that the origin of the song would probably never be ascertained, a conclusion he repeats in his latest book, *Pickin' on Peachtree: A History of Country Music in Atlanta, Georgia* (University of Illinois Press, 1990): "So like some of the works ascribed to Shakespeare, the authorship of 'You Are My Sunshine' probably will never be decided to everyone's satisfaction."

A familiar story of the song's origin goes like this. The song was first recorded by the Pine Ridge Boys on August 22, 1939; the Rice Brothers Gang recorded it on September 13, 1939; country music star and former Louisiana governor Jimmie Davis, along with one Charlie Mitchell, bought the "rights" to the song from Paul Rice for $35 in late 1939; Jimmie Davis published it, with "words and music by Jimmie Davis and Charles Mitchell," with the Southern Music Publishing Company of New York on January 30, 1940, and recorded it on February 5, that being the recording most country music fans remember and the one that placed the song among the top five country music recordings of that year. Gene Autry and Bing Crosby then made separate recordings of the song in 1941, solidifying its status as an American classic. According to Professor Daniel, neither the Pine Ridge Boys nor Jimmie Davis ever claimed to have written "You Are My Sunshine," but not so with Paul Rice; he claimed to have composed it in 1937.

There are still people alive, however, who remember hearing the song long before 1937—in particular, a mid-1930's performance of the song by Riley Puckett himself—and what these people remember is the name of the musician with whom both Riley Puckett and Paul Rice played in the *early* 1930's: Oliver Hood of LaGrange, Georgia.

Oliver Hood was a soft-spoken, self-taught man of simple pleasures and

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simple needs. He worked for decades as a doffer in the local cotton mill before becoming a full-time music teacher in the 1950's. He was one of the most popular and best liked men in LaGrange. His good looks charmed the women and good nature charmed the men, and never did he hesitate to share what little he ever had with anyone in need; he was, in a phrase, generous to a fault. He was also the local sage, the person whom neighbors turned to for advice. He offered to all a ready ear and a willing tongue: the former whenever needed, the latter upon request. And considering his complete lack of any formal education, his command of the English language was nothing short of remarkable. "I think General Sherman would have been very envious of Mama's ability to express herself in such beautiful and original terms of force," he once wrote of his wife. "I might add that it would make a bobcat's tail curl in horror at the element of mayhem which is evident in her exposition of the King's English at even such a minor incident as a telephone ringing."

Oliver Hood was also a master of the mandolin, the most sought-after music teacher in town, the host of a morning country music show on WLAG in LaGrange, and the organizer of numerous bands that played throughout west Georgia in the 1930's and 40's. As the natives well remember, his home on McGee Street stood as a virtual community center. Every Sunday afternoon musicians from all around the area would congregate on Oliver's front porch to play and record their music till sundown. Church in the morning, dinner at noon, then music from Oliver Hood's. This was tradition; this was ritual; this was how Sunday afternoons were spent for some twenty years. If music was heard issuing from the direction of McGee Street, LaGrange knew it was Sunday, and that Oliver Hood was home.

Contrary claims notwithstanding, Oliver Hood wrote "You Are My Sunshine." He wrote the words to the song on the back of a brown paper sack, which his children still possess, and he first performed the song at a VFW convention in LaGrange in 1933; he sang it through a megaphone out of a hotel window, and he sang no less than twenty verses, most of which are lost. Over the years he wrote hundreds of songs, as did all of his friends. To them, music was a not-for-profit venture, an act of love, something that transcended commercial consideration. Never did the thought of copyrighting their music ever come to mind—never, that is, until "You Are My Sunshine" rose to the top of the music charts in 1940. It was then that Oliver Hood began copyrighting his music—one song too late, as he so well knew. A poor cotton mill doffer doesn't easily quit dreaming of the fame and fortune that might have been, and Oliver Hood went to his grave dreaming.

In 1957, at the urgings of one of his sons, he wrote and copyrighted "Somebody Stole My Sunshine Away," a song about the theft of "You Are My Sunshine." A country-western band in California was prepared to record the song in early 1959, but by this time Oliver had grown skeptical and suspicious of all legal dealings; he refused to approve the necessary papers, and the contract was left unsigned upon his death in March. What follows is the chorus from this little-known sequel. Never before has it appeared in print:

Somewhere the sun is shining,
But there's rain in my heart
today.
There's no denying
My heart keeps crying—
Somebody stole my sunshine
away.

As Professor Daniel writes in *Pickin' on Peachtree*: "Mr. Hood was a musician and music teacher widely known in the west Georgia area. Surviving family members and musical associates are adamant in their assertion that Mr. Hood wrote the song. Those whom I interviewed consistently place the time of composition as the early 1930s."

To the people of west Georgia, as Professor Daniel concedes, the song's origin has never been a mystery. The author of "You Are My Sunshine" was Oliver Hood, my grandfather.

Theodore Pappas is the assistant editor of Chronicles.

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Rebirth of a Nation — July 1990 — Jacob Neusner, John Lukacs, Lawrence Uzzell, Daniel Stein, Donald Devine, and Richard Lamm on the pros and cons of immigration; Katherine Dalton on British journalists in America, and Donald Huddle on the immigration studies of Julian Simon and George Borjas. Plus Russell Kirk on Richard Nixon, M.E. Bradford on LBJ, and Kenneth McDonald on Canada's troublesome Quebec.

Restoring the Earth —August 1990 — Edward O. Wilson on how intelligent development can save the environment, William Jordan on restorationism, John Baden on the U.S. Forest Service, and Frederick Turner on natural technology. Plus Thomas Fleming on Earth Day, Chilton Williamson on Joseph Wood Krutch, Michael Warder on Valentin Rasputin, and Kenneth McDonald on the politics of acid rain in Canada.

Vandals in the Academy —September 1990 — E.D. Hirsch on the importance of *lower* education, Elizabeth Fox-Genovese on women's studies, Paul Gottfried on the politics of teaching humanities, and Thomas Molnar on our scrapbook approach to cultural literacy. Plus J.O. Tate on *Tenured Radicals*, E. Christian Kopff on Paul de Man, Leon T. Hadar on the *intifada*, and O.B. Hardison on the Stratford Shakespearean Festival in Ontario.

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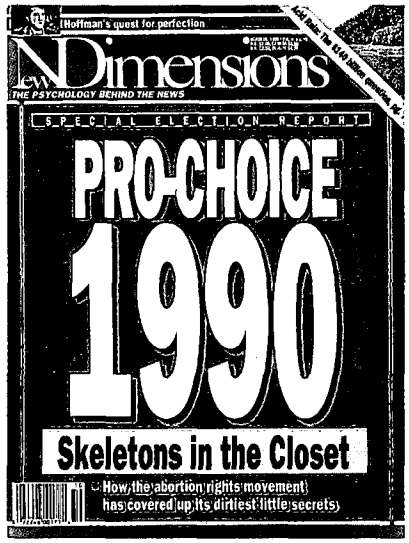
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